

Alternate Routes

A Journal of Critical Social Research
Volume 11, 1994

**Future Probabilities for a Somali Nation State:
Development and Governance**
Joel Reimer

**Dwarfed Wolves Stealing Scraps
from Our Masters' Tables:
Women's Groups and the Funding Process**
Si Transken

**Myths on the Left:
The Narrative and Discursive Practices
of the AFL-CIO News**
François Huot

Problematizing the Issue of Cultural Appropriation
Janice Hladki

ARCHIVE



Alternate Routes

A Journal of Critical Social Research

Presentation and Editorial Policy

Alternate Routes is a refereed multi-disciplinary journal published annually by graduate students in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University. The journal provides an important forum for the presentation of graduate research and discussion from across the field of critical social inquiry.

The editorial collective is interested in receiving papers written by graduate students (or co-written with faculty). The editorial emphasis is on the publication of critical and provocative analyses of both theoretical and substantive issues which clearly have relevance for progressive political intervention. To date, the main focus has been on debates within feminism, Marxism, and cultural studies and we welcome papers which challenge or advance questions and issues raised by these broadly defined perspectives. We also encourage responses to and reviews of recent publications.

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Call For Student Papers

Alternate Routes is seeking submissions for Volume 12, 1995. The editorial collective is interested in papers that address current theoretical and substantive issues within the social sciences. Manuscripts will be anonymously reviewed by faculty members from academic institutions across the country. Please use the American Psychological Association (APA) referencing system and keep endnotes to a minimum. Papers should be submitted double-spaced and in triplicate. Floppy disks formatted in WordPerfect 5.1 or Microsoft Word are required for papers accepted for publication.

We also welcome responses to recent publications, book reviews and discussions of work in progress.

Responses to this invitation to contribute should be postmarked no later than October 1, 1994.

Alternate Routes est à la recherche d'articles pour sa publication de 1995. Nous sommes intéressés à recevoir des analyses interdisciplinaires portant sur un vaste éventail de questions théoriques et substantives propres aux sciences sociales. Les manuscrits seront critiqués de façon anonyme par des professeurs de diverses institutions académiques du pays. Nous vous invitons à suivre le système de référence de l'American Psychological Association (APA) et à limiter la quantité des notes de fin de document autant que possible. Les articles devraient être présentés en format double interligne et en trois copies. Une disquette devrait accompagner le document et contenir le texte sur logiciel Wordperfect 5.1 ou MicroSoft Word.

Nous apprécierions par ailleurs des critiques des récentes publications, comptes rendus et travaux en cours.

Les réponses à cette invitation devraient être postées au plus tard le 1 octobre 1994 (le cachet de la poste en faisant foi).

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Critical Reviewers

The *Alternate Routes* editorial board would like to thank the following individuals who reviewed manuscripts for the past two issues.

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Introduction

Publishing *Alternate Routes* is no easy task. Members of the editorial collective and board are volunteers who receive no compensation and little formal recognition for their work. Every year there is the inevitable scramble to balance our own full-time pursuits with the strains of editorial meetings and the pressures of publication deadlines. Once one volume is issued, we immediately begin the arduous process over again. And all along, there is the constant struggle to maintain the financial support and subscriber base we need in order to keep our journal a viable enterprise.

Faced with such headaches, many may wonder whether all the trouble is worth it. I think I speak for all members of the editorial collective when I say that we would have it no other way. Despite the problems we face, we are all deeply committed to this project. We believe that *Alternate Routes* is a vitally important journal. It is one of the few spaces in the academic world reserved exclusively for quality graduate student work. It is also one of the few publications in which scholars can present *critical* and progressive social research.

The papers collected in the current volume represent our ongoing commitment to publish original and provocative research. Joel Reimer, a doctoral candidate with the Sociology and Anthropology Department at Carleton University, provides a detailed and timely analysis of the complex forces and structures at play in Somalia. His principle argument is that one of the underlying causes of state disintegration in Somalia was the imposition of a Western-style state structure in the post-colonial era. Reimer's analysis thus raises some unsettling questions about practices of development and peacekeeping in the 'New World Order.'

Si Transken is a feminist therapist, social worker, and activist. She is currently completing her Ph.D in Sociology at the University of Toronto. Her paper addresses a central dilemma facing front-line community organiza-

tions—how does state funding of these organizations affect their ability to make positive interventions in the lives of socially disadvantaged groups? Drawing upon the seminal work of Dorothy Smith, Transken reveals how the funding process adversely affected a women's ethnocultural organization with which she was involved. Her work should encourage more research into how the demands of funding agencies impact upon the goals and internal workings of women's groups.

François Huot, a doctoral candidate with the Communication Department of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, provides an intriguing semiotic analysis of the American labour publication, the *AFL-CIO News*. Finding inspiration within the pioneering work of Roland Barthes, Huot argues that ideological practices are not limited to 'right-wing' mainstream discourses, but are present on the 'Left' as well. The narrative and discursive structure of the *AFL-CIO News*, he suggests, is such that prevailing relations of power are disseminated, maintained, and reproduced.

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Janice Hladki is a cultural worker and Ph.D student in Cultural Studies and Feminism at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. She is active in theatre, film, and the performing arts. Her paper examines the complex issue of 'cultural appropriation.' She reviews current debates about whether mainstream artists from the dominant culture should be allowed to 'speak' for non-dominant cultures. Does this practice of cultural appropriation represent a form of 'cultural exploitation,' or is it simply a form of free artistic expression? Hladki argues that neither view is completely justified and she instead proposes a feminist and post-structuralist re-working of the issue of appropriation.

Both pieces of work presented as 'research in progress' address the issue of state policy in a global economy. David Skinner and David Robinson argue for the need to 're-think' traditional approaches employed in the study of cultural policies, particularly in an era dominated by profound technological, economic, political and social changes. J. Rachel Macdonald provides an insightful and thought-provoking analysis of how the ideology and practice of free trade has influenced current changes to Canada's social safety net.

As a last word, I would like to take the opportunity to thank an individual who has worked tirelessly to support *Alternate Routes* from the very beginning. Our departmental assistant, Eva Hegmann, has been an invaluable asset. Thanks to her remarkable efforts, we continue to enjoy regular financial support from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Eva has also campaigned on our behalf during the recent round of office reshuffling to ensure that *Alternate Routes* continues to have office space. She has patiently taken the time to answer our questions, provide advice, and listen to our complaints. Without her, *Alternate Routes* would remain only a fanciful whim.

D.C. Robinson
Ottawa, Canada
Spring, 1994



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Future Probabilities for a Somali Nation State: Development and Governance

*Joel Reimer
Carleton University*

INTRODUCTION

Somalia's state structure disintegrated in early 1991. This can partly be attributed to clanism, or at least to hostility between specific Somali clans. However, clan relations in Somalia are inextricably linked to historic context which cannot be ignored. Clan hostilities are part of Somali cultural history. The eruption of an apparently clan based civil war in Somalia in the 1990s is at least partly due to historically generated clan relations, but is inseparable from the history of successive Somali state governments promoting, in their rhetoric, Somali homogeneity as inconsistent with clan membership or affiliation.

I begin my analysis with an investigation of the idea of Somali homogeneity through an examination of the clan structure. Inter-clan relations within Somalia will be examined to highlight the integral place these relations have in Somali social organization. Clan affiliations, more than any other feature of Somali social organization, play a significant role in determining social status, access to resources, and the perception of individual and group interests. An examination of clan affiliations provides a picture of Somalia as a loose confederation of clans, often with divergent interests, a view which counters the picture of a homogeneous society.

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The examination of Somali clan structure is followed by an analysis of the structure and function of the Somali state immediately after independence in 1960 and of the succeeding government in 1969 of Siad Barre. This analysis provides insight into the role of the state in Somalia and the interaction of clan organization within the state structure itself. In the final analysis, the Somali state is shown to have acted more as a veneer of unified purpose and identity, while dominant clan groups suppressed diverging views and interests through the use of a variety of technologies of domination.¹ The current state of social disintegration is presented as evidence for these conclusions.

It is the purpose of this paper to analyze the underlying causes of state disintegration in Somalia, and to suggest that a major element in this disintegration was the external imposition of a Western style state structure in the post-colonial era. This implies a historical examination of the administration of the country and its 'statization,' which further requires an analysis of the history of government in Somalia, and of those who were governing.

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I proceed to an analysis of the influence of international development on the government of Somalia. This involves an examination of both the interest of the Somali government in maintaining its own security, and the interests of Western management of Somalia through development. Practices of development which used technologies of government in the interests of the West, and not in the interests of Somalis or the Somali government, contributed to the disintegration of the state.

Present international involvement in peacekeeping and humanitarian aid to Somalia appear geared to the 'normalization' of society, and the setting up of a new state. Somali people themselves appear desirous of a new state structure (Togane, 1993:3). The reorganization of Somalia into one or more states is important, since without a recognized state, the West, through the United Nations (UN) will not recognize Somali sovereignty. Unless Somalia regains its identity as a member state through a legitimate government, it remains ineligible for UN sponsored national reconstruction projects (Notes on Ergada Conference Proceedings, Ottawa, June 25, 1993). This in itself

does not speak to the absolute necessity for the re-establishment of a Somali state. However, it is the position of this paper that Third World populations are inextricably integrated within a global political and economic system of management, administration, and government. Thus, the disintegration and destabilization of Somalia also has implications for the security of the region and the wider political and economic field. A state structure is required not simply for the administration of some types of development funding, but for the wider discursive practice of global political and economic management and governance.

My analysis is facilitated by the use of the concepts of field, interests, and relations of domination from Bourdieu (1977:183ff) and theories of governance from Foucault (Gordon, 1991:19-21). Fields are constituted by sets of negotiated discursive practices and by the material and symbolic profits or stakes which can be gained from practices. Interests of agents within a field of practice can be understood as targets or 'objects' of practice with regard to the profits to be gained in the field. Agents within a field have individual interests which are misrecognized and mystified, and which determine their participation in the field in pursuit of the profits to be gained. The field of international development is presented in this paper as comprised by a project of governance, articulated to other discursive practices of political and economic management, comprised in a Foucaultian construction of governance as conducting the conduct of others.

The state in the Somali context functioned historically as a vehicle for the domination of Somalis, but failed in the long term to administer or manage the population. At present, the military presence in Somalia is attempting a similar practice of management and control. It is the view of this paper that many Somalis recognize the UN military administration of Somalia as a practice of domination similar to that of the Siad Barre government which preceded it and not as a practice of liberation.

THE MYTH OF HOMOGENEITY

Somalia is commonly thought of as a nation comprised of one of the largest single homogeneous ethnic and cultural blocs in Africa (I.M. Lewis, 1988:1). About 90 percent of the Somali population is ethnic Somali—people of African and Arab descent. Somalis speak a single language (with dialect variations) and uniformly practice Sunni Islamic religion (Miller, 1982:4). Successive Somali governments since 1960 have tried with varying degrees of success, and always only temporarily, to mobilize the population using a campaign of “pan-Somalism” which emphasizes the separation of Somalis from other Africans (Adam, 1983:32; Davidson, 1975:27).

One can make the case for a unified Somali identity when discussing Somali relations with other peoples, but clan and lineage organization is the basic internal principle of organization within Somali society (Lewis, 1984:159). Clans represent economic and political security in an individual’s attachment to kinsmen (Laitin and Samatar, 1987:45). Modern bonds of citizenship have not replaced older bonds and networks of cooperation thirty years after Somali independence and the constitution of Somalia as a nation state (Casanelli, 1982:260).

Prior to the creation of a Western-style state, Somalia was characterized by an absence of state institutions, an absence of institutionalized authority roles, and a lack of formal political offices. The closest thing to institutional government in pre-colonial Somali history were clan sultans and religious men (Sheikhs), who operated by charisma and influence rather than coercive and legislative authority (Laitin and Samatar, 1987:42). Clans developed their own alliances with other clans, and Somali politics have traditionally run along clan lines. The predominant historical occupation, nomadic pastoralism, militated against both the development of stable territorial groups and against the formation of state-like political, economic, and administrative institutions (A.I. Samatar, 1989:26).

Clans form a lineage derived socio-economic organizational framework within Somali society, which is legitimated by Islamic religious belief and tradition. The notion of shared religious heritage and common history is

encapsulated in the genealogies of the cornucopia of Somali clans and lineages (Casanelli, 1982:129). Islamic heritage prompts the formulation in popular belief of clan genealogies tracing Somali roots to Arab ancestry (Laitin and Samatar, 1987:44). These genealogies maintain every Somali's place in the social system (Casanelli, 1982:129). Divisions of tribal and general differences result from differences in perceived descent from the prophet Mohamed on the part of the two major lineage groups, the Samaale and the Sab (Lewis, 1980b:251).

This differentiation carries over to differences between clans within the two major groups. The local security system for livestock traders was based on lineage political structure, and was developed to safeguard the movements of pastoralists between pasture and water, and to market (Samatar, Abdi Ismail, 1987:359). Each clan thus comprised a lineage-based independent polity which interacted with others to further its own needs or interests. More than this, clan affiliation comprises a network of affection and loyalty which is analogous to a close family, and ties to one's lineage and clan and its history are strongly felt.

Hostility between clans and lineages has normally been such that despite common language and culture, religion is the only permanent factor upon which Somali society can depend to establish any sort of unity (Lewis, 1973:347). Inter-clan hostility, as well as hostilities between Somalis and their non-Muslim neighbours was not anomalous to the "habitually warring" pastoral nomads (Lewis, 1980a:34). The traditional picture of Somalia is predominantly one of a nation of loosely connected nomadic pastoralists. The culture itself centres around this mode of production and the corresponding societal institutions that support it, notably the clan system and Islam.

Politics in Somalia are tied to kin obligation and reliant on client relationships. This is partially based on clan loyalties, partially on reciprocal economic ties between clans (Miller, 1982:16). Clan affiliation plays a major role in Somali politics over and above religious and regional differences (Laitin and Samatar, 1987:155). Thus, Pan-Somalism, as the ideology of homogeneity was called, promoted the interests of the dominant clans as

synonymous with Somali interests and sought to repress the historic existence or interests of other clans. Consequently, the Somali state disintegrated as the government lost popular support, the economy deteriorated, development funding stopped, and clan militias became more heavily armed.

Historically, clans have defended their own interests against other clans. The socially structured situations, or fields (see Bourdieu, 1977:76), within which Somalis' interests have historically been defined have made this necessarily part of Somali social relations. This is especially the case when a major part of the field of practice is constituted by the need to counter the interests of what are perceived to be rival clans and their interests in the same field. Successive Somali governments have been perceived by Somalis as promoting a small number of clans' interests. The selective promotion of interests in Bourdieu's definition, represents domination as the appropriation of the mechanisms indispensable to the functioning of the field of practice, and consequently the appropriation of symbolic and material profits (Bourdieu, 1977:183-4).

DOMINATION AND THE SOMALI STATE

Somali state politics were, to a large extent, connected to clan politics. Within the Somali state there was continuing domination of clan membership on every level of political decision making (Haakonsen, 1984:58). Political parties, which first began to form in the 1950s, were clan based—for example, the Somaliland National Society (Ishaq) and the United Somali Party (Dir and Darood) (Lapidus, 1988:860).

Politics in Somalia are tied to kin obligation and reliant on client relationships. Clan affiliation plays a major role in Somali politics over and above religious and regional differences (Laitin and Samatar, 1987:155). Appointments, coalitions, the distribution of civil service posts, allocation of natural resources, and access to economic opportunities have rested historically almost entirely on kinship affiliation (Laitin and Samatar, 1987:155).

Political power and government continued to be deeply associated with clan affiliation throughout the 1970s and 1980s even with the increasing

urbanization of the Somali population. Urbanization did not radically diminish clan feeling or the power of clan affiliation in Somali society. In fact, clan feeling intensified in urban politics. Politicians exploited kinship loyalties to prolong and maximize political careers. This manifested itself in the form of patronage job appointments, contracts, and cash payments for support.

Ethnic support in Somalia has been the key to political success. Concomitantly it became advantageous for the state to distribute scarce natural resources through the clan structure. As a result, urban Somali politics witnessed an alarming resurgence of intra/inter-clan conflicts (Laitin and Samatar, 1987:46). Examples of this can be drawn from the experiences of successive governments of the Somali Republic since independence in 1960.

The parliamentary model of the Somali Republic in 1960 was fashioned after an Italian system, reconstructed after twenty years of Fascist rule (Davidson, 1975:25-26). However, the Somali manifestation of this parliamentary model reproduced the problems of patronage, and the exploitation of voting power for sectional or personal gain (Davidson, 1975:26). A power-struggle began shortly after independence in 1960, evidenced by the fragmentation of political leadership, each of which resorted to the backing of their own clans and lineages—the clan became the means to power within the state (Sheck and Mohamoud "Ashur," 1978:152).

The state democracy was reduced, in essence, to the machinery of parliamentary representation (Davidson, 1975:26). The Somali clan self-rule system, in which clans and clan alliances operated, adapted into a party system. Political parties began to represent clan interests and alliance interests. This further resulted in parliamentary conflict over sectional advancements (Davidson, 1975:26). As a result, the government could not reinforce even a minimal Pan-Somalism, but broke down into clan based interest groups (Davidson, 1975:27).

In October of 1969, Somali army general Mohamed Siad Barre took power in a coup and established the Somali Democratic Republic. The new

government idealized the 'revolution' as having been against European models of government, but also against aspects of Somali structure and custom that proved throughout pre-colonial history to be handicaps to progress (Davidson, 1975:29). Old values that were inconsistent with the direction of change were to be abolished (Siad Barre, 1974). Ostensibly, the major target of this ideal was tribalism/clanism.

Siad Barre's new 'scientific socialist' government was determined to liquidate the "malicious system of tribalism in every form and every other phenomena in bad practice in state activities" (Sheck and Mohamoud "Ashur," 1978:154-155). Corruption and tribalism were presented as having derailed the first independent Somali government leaving behind a system where "educated people" remained at the bottom and "worthless people" were at the top (Siad Barre, 1974:58). This situation was blamed for the destruction of pan-Somalism.

Siad Barre promoted an explicit policy of egalitarian modernization, which subscribed to the ideal of nomadic equality. Somali government rationalization for this policy was that it would unify the population under a banner of Pan-Somalism (Davidson, 1975:29-30). It was hoped that a new Somalism would arise and that people would forget previous clan ties in favour of a new spirit. The goal of pan-Somalism at the expense of clan affiliation was not achieved for several reasons.

The first reason was that the Siad Barre coup itself was enabled by a set of clan alliances. The Siad Barre coup shifted power from the northern Majerteen clan and its affiliate clans who had been in power from 1960-1969 to southern clans (Schraeder, 1986:647). This resulted in the stacking of important government positions with individuals of Said Barre's clan groupings (Schraeder, 1986:647). Consequently, political tensions were reproduced along a new axis between clans from the formerly British northern and central regions, and the formerly Italian southern regions (Schraeder, 1986:647).

Siad Barre's regime continued to rule from a clan supported power base. Three clan groups were of special prominence in Siad Barre's govern-

ment, a formation that was unofficially called the M.O.D. configuration. 'M.O.D.' corresponded to the three major clan groups that formed the top of the political power structure. These were the *Marehan* (Darood): the president's patrilineage; *Ogaden*: Siad Barre's mother's clan; and *Dhulbahante*: Siad Barre's chief son-in-law's lineage. Siad Barre acknowledged vital maternal links in the Ogaden region through which he was able to exercise control over Somali external relations with Ethiopia. The M.O.D. manifested itself in the 'Marehanizing' of the Foreign Service and government bureaucracies (Sheik-Abdi, 1981:166), as well as the disintegration of the ruling junta into clan groupings, and the tribalization of the military (Samatar and Samatar, 1987:684). Additionally, the construction of the power structure in this manner reproduced political friction between northern and southern parts of the country (Lewis, 1988:222).

In 1976, the government changed to a civilian single party government. This merely created a widely representative setting for the M.O.D. power bloc. All the members of the former Supreme Revolutionary Council and 19 new members (most, but not all, military personnel) formed the new Central Committee. This was seen as a sign that Siad Barre was not interested in modifying his version of benign despotic paternalism but rather in giving his authority greater legitimacy (Lewis, 1988:223). It also provided a means for consolidating control of the population and mechanisms of government.

This did not take place in an absence of resistance. Several guerrilla resistance groups fought against government forces. Like the government, resistance groups had specific clan affiliations. The Somali National Movement (SNM) was formed primarily by people from northern lineages and was dominated by members of *Ishaaq* clans (Samatar, Ahmed I., 1988:141). The Siad Barre government was overthrown in early 1991 by the forces of the United Somali Congress (USC). The USC whose name is misleading, has come under criticism from Somali academics as a party connected to the Hawiye clans, and once again not representative of Somalis as a whole. The number of factions rivaling for power in Somalia in the 1990s is evidence supporting this assessment.

The history of Somali state politics is one of a shifting 'field of play' in which the politics of clan interests were transformed into a state organization. The creation of the state did not change the interests of individuals and clan groups, except to enlarge the stakes. The field "calls forth and gives life to a specific form of interest...as tacit recognition of the stakes of the game" (Bourdieu, 1992:117). The specific interest and practice in the field varies according to the position occupied, be it dominant or subordinate (Bourdieu, 1992:117). Somali states have acted within a transformed field of practice according to culturally and socially defined interests produced by historically delimited fields. These fields of practice have at their root a cultural history of clan relations, which make certain modes of thought appear necessary, inevitable, and desirable. Siad Barre was not merely a despot, and the government he overthrew was not merely corrupt. Within Somali society, the field as set up by the West began to operate according to Somali 'rules of play' and Somalis demonstrated a practical mastery of these 'rules.'

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Political turmoil was a 'stake' in which actors were interested, intrinsically tied to the field of practice, because the game to be played in the field was imposed from outside and never fully internalized. Somali interest and investment was born out of a transformed field of practice and a historical system of dispositions adjusted to the practice proposed by the field. This implies a sense of the practices the field proposes and of the stakes involved, an inclination and an ability to act (Bourdieu, 1992:118).

The implications of this is that Somali political disunity and clan hostility is not exclusively to blame for the current situation. A major part of the difficulty is that Somalis suddenly found themselves living in a nation-state, and not just a territory, and politics was suddenly a new game, on a new field, with new rules. The field of practice was given to Somalia, but Somalis were abandoned to adjust historic interests to the new field.

Under Siad Barre, the Somali government stated as one of its main goals the development of the Somali nation. The Siad Barre government was at one level characterized by its attempts to develop Somalia. Siad Barre cultivated and retained a popular image of a modest man of the people (I.M. Lewis,

1988:211). A literacy campaign and a rural development program were instituted. The literacy campaign, as well as official government opposition to Ethiopian rule of the Ogaden territory stimulated nationalist sentiment in Somalia and for a time bolstered the popularity of the government (I.M. Lewis, 1988:236). The Somali government mobilized to aid and resettle drought stricken nomads in 1974-5 famine, with the help of massive inputs of international aid and relief funds (I.M. Lewis, 1988:218). While the famine relief helped again to generate popular support for the government, it also helped to forward two of Siad Barre's long term development plans: resettlement of nomads, and detribalization (I.M. Lewis, 1988:218).

Deeper analysis suggests that Siad Barre's interest in development stemmed largely from the underlying goals of maintaining and increasing the administration and management of Somalia by his government. It provided a means for the undermining of clan affiliations and identities which were the source of much of the internal political opposition to his regime. Nomads were resettled in agricultural or fishing cooperatives among people of unrelated clans synthetically creating communities of Somalis which were not based on clan identity. Additionally, the settlement of a large proportion of the predominantly nomadic and dispersed population allowed for increased government administrative control over this population (Schraeder, 1986:648).

The Siad Barre government was unable to maintain this level of support from and control over the population in the long term. This is due to a variety of factors. The preeminent place of the pastoral way of life in Somali culture mediated against permanent settlement, especially in combination with a Somali cultural disdain for farming and fishing (Haakonsen, 1984:109; Sheck and Mohamoud "Ashur," 1978:156). Clan feeling also played a role in that farming and fishing historically were occupations of lower status clans in the social structure. Somali herders did not identify themselves with the new forms of life, preferring instead to return to camel and cattle herding as soon as it became possible. In the end, the government found itself unable to complete the process of fusing forms of settled life and their associated

material, social, and cultural 'profits' with Somali individual and clan identities (see Rose, 1992:32).

Finally, the Ogaden War (1977-78) left a catastrophic political and economic aftermath. The economy, put under strain by a massive refugee influx, coupled with a the disenchantment of the population because of Somalia's defeat, left a series of clan alliances and antagonisms in the place of the 1970s buoyant nationalism and stripped Siad Barre of what popularity he had retained (I.M. Lewis, 1988:260-261).

WESTERN INTERVENTION: DEVELOPMENT AS GOVERNANCE

Development in the common sense view is a practice of economic and political improvement and transformation of other, 'less-developed' areas. Historically, its moral rationality, its justification, has been constructed in terms of a mission of 'civilization' (Pearce, 1988:165). The discourse of development contained an inherent, absolute need for civilization and progress (Pearce, 1988:124; Schaar, 1979:68).

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Development is better defined as a form of government or administration—a practice of management, a set of political rationalities and practices for conducting the conduct of other nations.² Development as a locus of governing is not concerned with the legitimacy of the practice of government in which it is involved, but rather with a form of security: the preservation and enhancement of a certain global level of existence and through this, the endurance of its field of government over a prolonged period of time (Gordon, 1991:19). Security as conceptualized here embraces the future well being of a field of governance and as such encompasses prosperity, abundance, equality, and freedom which are necessary conditions of this security (Gordon, 1991:19). A founding principle of development is that economic and political development of marginal regions is a necessary condition of global security, the development of the capacity to preserve and enhance a certain global level of existence (c.f. Gordon, 1991:19). This is simultaneously coupled in development discourses with an assumption that less-

developed countries desire and should desire development (Shils, 1968:7-9; Cochrane, 1971:34).

The Siad Barre government had been interested in development primarily because it enabled the extension of government throughout the population, while furthering political interests of dominant groups. The interest was the security of the nation, deeply associated with Siad Barre's clan affiliations, and therefore the prosperity (economic, political, social etc.) of the state. However, aspirations for development lead to increasing amounts of foreign assistance. During the 1974-5 drought/famine and especially after the dismissal of Soviet advisory personnel from Somalia in 1977, Somalia came to be increasingly dependent on international development, aid funding, and personnel to further its programmes and plans to improve the performance and develop the national economy. Dependence on foreign development assistance brought with it increased scrutiny and monitoring of Somalia by development agencies and brokers, and a concomitant decrease in local control over Somalia's economic and political affairs.

Western economists and social scientists continue to carry out a specific role in liberal development enterprises, notably that of proposing constraints on Third World states in various attempts to force conformity to Western development models (Cochrane, 1971:23). Such constraints include IMF prescriptions for currency devaluation and imposed conditions on how Third World governments are allowed to spend their money. The IMF and Western banks control the process of development, partly by making any assistance contingent on Third World governments adopting policies that further specific development strategies supported by the IMF (Frank, 1981:132).

Because development and underdevelopment are products of the same historical process, the country to be developed must first be made to accept itself as, and then to operate as being 'underdeveloped' (Frank, 1975:17). This necessarily implies a discursive practice through which 'underdevelopment' is created in the Third World. 'Underdevelopment' is misrecognized as due to the survival of archaic institutions or the existence of capital shortages

in 'less-developed' regions, but is actually generated by the same historical processes that generated economic development (Frank, 1966:23).

Those being developed are subject to domination by the West which accumulates knowledge about the Other and can then exercise power over the known region (Foucault, 1980:69). A managerial criterion is set up by the discourse through which the conduct of the country being developed is conducted (Foucault, 1980:68). Development takes into account all processes related to the population of the country being developed, as discussed in Foucault's definition of the economy (Foucault, 1991:100). The knowledge of the West engaging in development discursively relocates the country being developed within a field of relationships in which it becomes an object upon which intervention is possible (Procacci, 1991:157).

This necessarily implies a state of government in Foucault's definition, and therefore the justification of security, since development involves interventions which function to assure the endurance (security) of social and economic processes.³ Security is the necessary requisite of the exercise of power and a principle of political practice (Gordon, 1991:20). In the case of international development, the concern is not with the security of individual nations being developed, but rather the security of the political-economic system managed by watchdog organizations like the IMF.

However, countries being developed are not only *subject to* the management of development forces. They come to act as authors and *subjects of* their own conduct (Donald, 1992:14). Government as implied in development is not merely the way in which the conduct of developing countries might be directed, but also practices which are calculated to act upon the possibilities of action of developing countries (in Donald, 1992:14). Development makes the exercise of managing power unnecessary as developing countries make the effects and constraints of power play on themselves, becoming the principle of their own subjection (Foucault, 1979:202).

For example, Somalia desired development notably to extend mechanisms of government over the population of the nation and to improve the security of the state. In applying for international development assistance,

Somalia became the object of political and economic interventions, but also the subject of its own development practice, necessarily tied to the practice of international development agents. Somalia made development plans for itself, but the IMF and World Bank demand to see development plans before any assistance will be given (W.A. Lewis, 1983:274). The issue was not whether Somalia should be developed, but whether it would conform to practices calculated to contribute to some form of global prosperity and through prosperity, the security of the global system—an issue of government and not altruism.

The IMF encourages the development of “areas of comparative advantage” (Laitin and Samatar, 1987:126). During the tenure of the Siad Barre government (1969-90), the IMF’s stated aim was to transform Somalia into an exporter of primary and plantation products to the industrial world (Laitin and Samatar, 1987:126). These aims are reflected in the Somali government’s development plans of the 1980s.

Somalia became involved in the international development ‘game’ because of specific interests in the field. It entered as a free player in that it had a knowledge of the field, an apprehension of the ‘rules,’ and a sense of the stakes or profits to be made within the field. The dominating players were the IMF and Western development interests who control the various resources and capital being ‘played’ for. Development for Somalia meant following the standard IMF package of currency devaluation, spending cuts, discontinuation of subsidies to social programs, privatization of state enterprises, and reduced wages. Major international development brokers, such as the IMF were mainly interested in stabilizing Somalia, economically and politically, and making Somali economic and political systems accommodating to the West, an interest also inherent in Siad Barre’s construction of a state and emphasis on development (Miller, 1982:14).

The price for pursuing the stakes of the international development field was implicit and complicit agreement by the Somali government that Somalia was an underdeveloped country. The stakes became objectified, mediated by objective, institutionalized mechanisms, ensuring “the reproduction of the

structure of the distribution of the [social and economic] capital" which reproduces the relations of domination (Bourdieu, 1977:184). Relations of domination in development practice are set up "in pure objectivity between institutions," which is to say between socially recognized qualifications and defined positions and thus through the social mechanisms which guarantee the qualifications and positions and their distribution between individuals and institutions in a field of practice (Bourdieu, 1977:187-188). What Bourdieu refers to as the "misrecognition" of the relations of domination as a relationship between two reasonably equal parties results in a complicity on the part of the dominated in their own domination, the dispositions or interests which incline them to complicity being themselves the effect of domination (Wacquant, 1992:24).

20 Once Somalia had 'agreed' it was underdeveloped and had balance of payments difficulties, lack of economic growth, rapid inflation, and other 'normal' traits of underdeveloped countries, the government could not 'un-accept' the situation. In 1981, Somalia turned to the IMF and World Bank for assistance and formed agreements which were to relieve economic pressures stemming from arrears on the payment of interest on its foreign debt (Gray, 1989:132).

The agreement involved devaluation of the Somali Shilling and a decrease in state economic involvement in return for IMF approval of several large scale USAID and World Bank economic projects which were designed to generate hard currency (Laitin and Samatar, 1984:71). Somalia was also granted credit facilities of US\$150 million between the years 1981-87 which contributed to a high enough level of imports to keep the urban population content for this period and protected Siad Barre's popularity and tenure, at least in the Mogadishu area.

In 1987, sharp devaluation of the Somali Shilling resulted in an equally sharp increase in the price of imported consumer goods and a corresponding increase in domestic unrest. The cause was an experimental "two-tier" foreign exchange rate set up under IMF conditions. The rise in prices and unrest resulted in the government discontinuing the "two-tier" rate and

returning to a fixed exchange rate of 100Shillings=US\$1 (Gray, 1989:132). Somalia also failed to meet required payments on its foreign debt.

Because of this, Somalia was declared ineligible to use the general resources of the IMF, and due to the IMF classification of Somalia as 'non-cooperative' any large scale development organizations affiliated with the IMF such as USAID, World Bank, CIDA, and the UN also refused to participate in bilateral development programs. Somalia had demonstrated that it understood the field, and its position in the field, and expressed interest in the profits to be gained, but ultimately had refused to pursue its interests in the proper way, essentially attempting to win without playing by the rules.

Somalia was still seen as disadvantaged, underdeveloped, but had demonstrated an unwillingness to enter into the practices that went with the field, and as a result became further marginalized. In a post-Cold War era however, such marginalization did not present a danger or challenge to an incorporating and universal program of government. Somalia's non-cooperativeness could be ignored provided that Somalia itself could remain out of sight (see Rose, 1992:39). "On the margins of a form of civilization seen as self-sustaining, the marginal can be exposed to the harsh exigencies of fate, can be consigned to control by the forces of law and order, or can act as the useful objects of improving charity" (Rose, 1992:39). Charity, which Somalia did receive in the form of food and other humanitarian aid, remains in development discourse as an act of choice in which richer countries choose to improve themselves by their participation in practices to help those less fortunate than themselves (see Rose, 1992:39).

In the end, Somalia has not remained in a 'swept under the carpet' state. Civil war, the disintegration of civil society, and famine due to the use of food as a political weapon have made Somalia too visible to ignore. Additionally, the proximity of Somalia to Kenya, a nation with large international interests, coupled with the influx into Kenya of large numbers of Somali refugees, is likely to have contributed to a sense of necessity for Western intervention in Somalia before Somali problems became regional problems, and then global problems. It seems highly coincidental that American troops, moving to

peacekeeping duty in Somalia, were present and purposefully obvious in Nairobi at the time of Kenya's federal election in December 1992. In any event, in trying to curb a global problem before it occurred, the West has constituted Somalia as a global problem, left now to the forces of global law and order.

BUT WHAT NOW?

The Siad Barre government was finally unable to maintain effective political control of the country. Involvement in the Ogaden War, which had originally contributed to national solidarity, ended with increased unrest as Somalis from various clans came to believe that Siad Barre had acted out of personal clan interests at the expense of the others. Regulatory practices by the IMF and development brokers contributed to the disintegration of the Somali state through imposing constraints that raised inflation, made goods less available, and consequently resulted in more repressive exercise of power by the government to retain control.

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Currently, the West is involved in peacekeeping in Somalia, a practice associated with regulating conduct through use of military force, consigned to control by the forces of global law and order in a practice of normalization of society (see Rose, 1992:39). Peacekeeping is also viewed as a mechanism of Western control, which has contributed to the polarization of the conflict, rather than to its end. The focus of attention and attacks on Mohamed Farah Aideed and select other clan leaders generates a system of shifting alliances between the clans who support Aideed against the UN and clans who oppose Aideed in a situation where 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend.' In this case, the field is Somali, the rules are Somali, the interests and stakes are Somali, and the UN is trying to define new boundaries on the field, as Siad Barre attempted to do before them. There is little Somali interest in 'order for order's sake,' nor for a new repressive government under a UN flag.

If development is to be done in Somalia, Somalia must have a state or similar structure since development is contingent on an agreement between developing states and development institutions and developed states through

development brokers. A transitional UN trusteeship followed by elections and the setting up of a new government is likely to result in chaos, with the winner forming a government, and opposition forming almost immediately to denounce the new government as illegitimate (Notes on Ergada Meetings, Ottawa, June, 1993).

A simple Western style trusteeship is unlikely to fare well in Somalia because of the importance of the clan and lineage in the Somali mode of life. One's lineage in Somali society constitutes an individual's identity. It is one's family in a very real sense, operating as it does to promote the interests of its members, assure their material, political, and economic security. The Somali clan also operates as a welfare system. One cannot simply work around clans, ignore them, or dissolve them. To do so amounts to destroying a society in order to improve its condition. Unless the new state structure incorporates the Somali clan structure in a manner that allows egalitarian access to the stakes—social, political, and material profits to be gained—the situation of civil disintegration will be reproduced. A new state organization for Somalia requires that it be constructed out of a Somali set of perceptions, dispositions, practices, and mechanisms of organization in order to contribute to Somalia's own security as defined by this analysis.

The formation of a state remains in Somali interests. A state, or similarly recognizable institution, is necessary since development requires a relationship of a developing state with Western states and institutions through development brokers. Beyond this, within the political and economic global system of governance, the disintegration of Somali society represents a threat to the prosperity and security of not only Somalia, but also to the region and consequently to global governance. Somalia's situation is constructed as a problem, and as such requires interventions and solutions. The discourse of development and governance not only define the problem, but also the range of appropriate and possible solutions to the problems. State formation and integration remains a discursively constructed interest, not only of development agents, but also of the Third World.

The current trend is still toward political and economic normalization through administration. Peacekeeping forms another locus of government despite the record of development in Somalia. The present economic and political situation in Somalia suggests that while the era of development may be all but over in the country, with the end of the Cold War and the reconstitution of ideologies of global security, a transformation of the process may result in a process of management that includes economic management as a core ingredient, but as a part of a more overtly comprehensive process of global pacification and security.

In fact, relations of ruling appear to necessitate themselves in reference to previous failings or imperfections. Development has formed a locus of governmentality in an array of practices and strategies constituted as a never ending process of perfection. Development has failed to regulate and perfectly govern Somalia. This does not generate a necessity to reject development as a project of governance, but rather is fundamental to the project of government. The shortcomings of previous strategies of development, as conditioned by discursive relations of ruling, reproduces development in a perpetual quest for the perfection of governmentality. To put it simply, governance always fails, and failure is an incitement to further governance.⁴ Development has always fallen short of achieving its goals, and this incites new strategies for development.

It is here we see further evidence for development as part of a project of government. A purely altruistic or commercial motivation for development would not continue to incite development. The agencies and individuals interested in development would have cut their losses and given up. Governmentality continues to hold the stakes high, suggesting that the stakes are attainable, and ever more within reach. But it is a misrecognition that serves to reproduce not only the political rationalities and practices of development, but also the possibility for the reproduction of failure and thus the necessity for new technologies and strategies of governance.

Development and peacekeeping are not done for altruistic purposes, nor for simple reasons of economic opportunism and exploitation of less powerful

countries by the powerful. Moral justifications for managing practices are tied to the necessities of government in a system of discursive practices which require global security. This is a situation within which one cannot ask "should development be done." Development is only one of a system of technologies of government. The practice of government continues, and will continue, because it is necessary to the maintenance of security and order. Somalia may get a new state organization which incorporates and listens to the various interests of the majority of the clans. Short of a major redistribution of social, economic, and political capital within the global fields of power relations however, it is unlikely that Somalia will escape forces of domination and government.

NOTES

1. By 'interests' I mean the perceived "forthcoming realities" that actors pursue sensitized and mobilized by their identities and affiliations (Bourdieu, 1977:76; Wacquant, 1992:26).
2. Foucault, cited in Gordon (1991:19).
3. Foucault. Lecture, College de France, 5 April, 1979 in Gordon 1991:19.
4. This is Alan Hunt's (1993) interpretation of Rose and Miller's (1992) theorization of governance as a congenitally failing operation. The world is not so much conceived as governed, but rather is characterized by the 'will to govern,' a continual interest in 'doing better next time.'

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Dwarfed Wolves Stealing Scraps From Our Masters' Tables: Women's Groups and the Funding Process

Si Transken
University of Toronto

THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF TEXTUAL REALITY AT 'WOMEN ACROSS CULTURES'

31

Much has been written in the recent past exploring and documenting the experiences of women working with women's organizations and women's causes (Adamson, 1988; Griffiths, 1993; Iannello, 1992; Ng, 1988; Pal, 1993; Remington, 1991; Ristock, 1990; Ristock, 1991; Vickers et. al, 1993; Walker, 1990). Feminists of many persuasions and ideologies agree that there is an enormous amount of work that must still be done before Canadian society has changed to the extent that women will authentically experience equal access to resources, choices, and opportunities (Anderson, 1992; Backhouse and Flaherty, 1992; *Canadian Women's Studies*, 1989; Maceda-Villanueva, 1990). What do the funding processes mean to these organizations attempting to empower women both within the walls of the feminist organization and within society?

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This article explores how funds are brought into small grass-roots women's organizations and what the funding processes do to the women's relationships with the funders, with each other, with their original goals and with the internal workings of the organization.¹ My belief is that the processes which occur in one organization are occurring in many small women's organizations in Canada today. This is an exploratory paper preparing the foundation for an institutional ethnography of a feminist social service agency.

Funding realities in women's organizations shape who enters, who stays, what they do while inside, how they engage with each other, and when they leave. Funding defines the limits of what is possible in relation to supports such as childcare being provided during events, transportation being offered to women, and educational materials being made available in more than one language. Funders establish wage hierarchies that shape how women interact with each other. For example, one funder will allocate twenty dollars an hour for one woman's wages while another funder will allocate only seven dollars an hour.

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Women who work in the front lines of organizations that are attempting to resist women's oppression are often poorly paid (if paid at all), have no benefit packages, have crowded and sparsely-resourced working environments, are hired only part-time or on contract, and are expected to accomplish goddess-like feats and deeds. All of the women who are involved with women-centred non-profit groups or agencies are affected in many ways by the funding realities of the agency. The stressful and unattractive features of the work environment are largely a consequence of the funding process. Most of these organizations rely on money from government sources (Sarick, 1992; Walker, 1991:5) or from organizations which are government 'wannabes' such as Trillium or the United Way. These funders irregularly throw us (or benevolently allow us to steal) scraps from their tables. We are like dwarfed wolves, sometimes barking, sometimes cringing, sometimes biting, but always watching the masters for cues.

This paper describes the funding process in one organization, *Women Ethnicity Crossing (WEC)*,² as it has evolved over the past five years. WEC, according to its mission statement, "exists to enhance the lives and expand the options of Immigrant, First Nations, and Visible Minority women." Since I was one of its founding members, I can describe its evolution over time. Originally we were a small group of women with a vague and fuzzy vision. Now we are erratically evolving into an organization that produces specific facts and quantifiable 'programs.' We have a budget of approximately one hundred thousand dollars yearly and help create employment (part-time, contract, and/or full-time) for approximately five women per year. Hundreds of people are touched by this organization through conferences or direct counselling and escorting. Others are touched by our public presentations and seminars, or through our advocacy and community work. This 'agency' is housed in a room measuring twenty feet by twelve feet in which one can find a coffee pot, two computers, a photocopy machine, one phone line, and the many women who week by week and hour by hour make WEC a living entity.

My framework for analyzing the agency I wish to discuss in this paper has been informed by many authors (Adamson, 1988; Ng, 1988; Remington, 1991; Ristock, 1990; Ristock, 1991; Walker, 1990). These authors' descriptions of women's challenges and experiences of resistance within an organizational context give some focus to the funding process. I believe that, as activists, there is more we need to examine and more information we must share regarding the funding process.

I believe that through documenting and sharing this knowledge we can become more effective activists. Simultaneously, I suspect that some of us have hesitated to document and promote our 'insider's knowledge' for fear of backlash from funders. Dorothy Smith's (1990a, 1990b, 1992a, 1992b) methodology will assist my attempt to understand and describe the way I have experienced and participated in the funding process and its consequences for WEC.

My reflections on the funding process have been built up over an eight year period. Preceding WEC, I was involved with another women's organi-

zation in Northern Ontario. In this organization, at various times over a four year period, I was assigned the task of 'fund-raiser,' 'membership co-ordinator,' 'project supervisor,' and 'president.' In retrospect, the funding process and consequences at this women's centre were very similar to those I am witnessing and reading about elsewhere.

More recently I have been involved with WEC where, over a five year period, I have alternatively been the 'co-ordinator,' 'chairperson of the research committee,' 'intern supervisor,' and 'board member at large.' During my eight years of experience with these two organizations (almost exclusively as a volunteer), I have attended approximately eighty face-to-face meetings with representatives of different funding sources. I have been a participant in over ninety-six Board or 'Collective' meetings. I have spent hundreds of additional hours reading the documents produced by these women's organizations as well as those produced by the many potential and actual funding representatives. Hundreds of hours have been invested in reading formal academic papers regarding socialism, feminism, community organization, racism, funding, the state, and public administration. These sources of information have simultaneously filtered through the formal and informal discussions I have had with my kindred activists. These experiences constitute the 'raw data' on which I construct this paper.³

Smith (1990a, 1990b) has a complex and subtle way of re-examining how we describe and think about the world, and a paper of this length cannot do justice to the richness of her work. Smith (1990a:61-80) describes the process through which knowledge becomes objectified and how 'facts' come to be different from women's actual lived experience. Smith suggests there are six components to this process (Smith, 1990a:73). These parts of the process overlap, intermingle and collectively form a loop in which we can become bound up in a taken-for-granted way. There is the "lived actuality" which is reshaped during the "social organization of the production of the factual account." "Lived actuality" is our everyday spontaneously experienced and most authentic or uncensored perceptions and thoughts. A "factual account" is constructed and read by an audience and, through convention,

assumed to be "what actually happened or what is." The "reading/hearing" of the factual account is shaped by "the social organization of the reading of the factual account." In other words, understanding is separated into our everyday experiential understanding and the understanding that becomes formalized, documented and validated as 'knowledge.' For example, when we read something in a newspaper article there are certain unchallenged practices we casually engage in unless we have been explicitly trained to do otherwise. We have been trained, for example, to believe what is said in newspapers. We have been trained, or our minds have been 'formatted,' to slip information into certain categories. These categories have been created and maintained by dominant groups in society. On a day-to-day basis people become participants in the process of creating and maintaining that dominance. For example, more credibility is usually given to information presented in a newspaper article than to a woman 'gossiping' about what she saw while she was on her way to get her hair done.

In this paper I describe each of these parts of Smith's model to the extent that they relate to government funding of a grassroots ethnocultural minority women's centre in Northern Ontario. Each component (lived reality, the social organization of the production of the factual account, the factual account, the social organization of the reading of the factual account and what actually happened or what is) are somewhat tangled together; they are not distinctly separate and linear and, therefore, it is difficult to talk about them in discreet and consistent ways as they relate to WEC.

At WEC we have received funding from nine different sources since the organization was founded in 1988. Our initial funding came from Canada Employment and Immigration and our second (second both in sequence and in amount of funding) primary source of funding was the Secretary of State. Some sources have funded us repeatedly (Canada Employment and Immigration and Secretary of State Multicultural Division, Citizenship). This means we often have more problems, but also more safety nets than the one-funder organization Ng studied in 1988. The schedules, expectations and consequences of being funded by each specific funding source are somewhat

different, but there are also patterns that are shared in the way funders interact with small funding recipients like WEC and in the way funding recipients like WEC come to interact with funders.

Funding processes shape who we are as an organization, what we can do, and who we may become. Most insidiously, funding processes influence how we (as staff, activists or clients) come to define ourselves and how we interact with each other within the agency of WEC. We often feel and think that these funders or potential funders are our masters and that we must cater to their every whim and demand.⁴

These funding masters seem to us as distant and uninterested. They appear to speak an alien language. These masters demand that we travel to their territory, exhaust ourselves to catch their interest with innovative magic tricks, and learn to speak their language of 'bureaucratese.' Organizations like WEC compete with other women's organizations and charitable groups for scraps from the masters' tables. Funding representatives and their trail of colourful pamphlets frequently remind us that there is a finite amount of money available within any geographical area, in each yearly budget, or for a specific issue. When an organization like WEC has many masters it can be both an advantage and a disadvantage.

LIVED REALITY

A multitude of women face a variety of problems and discomforts on a day-to-day basis. These are experienced by women as somewhat random—their causes, sources and consequences appear unrelated. Canada's ethnocultural minority women and/or working-class women, because of socially created barriers which stigmatize them as 'ethnocultural minorities' or 'poor women,' face more irritants on a day-to-day basis than their White anglophone Canadian-born middle-class sisters.⁵ WEC is a group of women in Northern Ontario who "exist to enhance the lives and expand the options of Immigrant, First Nations and Visible Minority women." This mandate is a quotation from our legal mission statement which we had to construct so that we could become incorporated, apply for government funds, and exist as an organiza-

tion. This was explained to us in some of our first meetings with women who had worked for the federal government as project officers. During our evolution, WEC activists have interpreted our mission statement very broadly, openly and creatively. Our mission statement's practical applications are always in flux.

Most of WEC's women's daily-life problems *are not caused* by women's unplanned choices, aversion to hard work or sacrifice, or absence of ambitions. These are the causes of women's problems in the world-view usually presented by funders. In contrast, we believe that women's problems are caused by the social structures and social relationships in which women live: patriarchy, capitalism, racism, and centralism. Women's activities can become distorted and unbalanced because they have their access to resources and opportunities regularly blocked. This 'blockage,' moreover, is intrinsic to the way the social world is run. Our day-to-day lack of access is a necessary prerequisite for someone else's day-to-day opportunity and privilege.

Women's common daily problems are generally loose, sloppy, leaky, and vaguely defined. Women, for example, *do not* walk in to WEC and immediately announce, in the language of the funders, that their "problem is that they are long-term employment disadvantaged affirmative action appropriate women" who require "marketable skills training and employment readiness preparation to integrate fully into Canadian society." Problems become defined and imagined in these bureaucratic formats (categorized and fragmented) as a result of the funders' interactions (pamphlets, reports, cheques, phone-calls, memos, etc.) with our organization's staff and volunteers. This is a detailed and ongoing process that involves active and interactive participants. This process is seen as normal and is unchallenged and taken-for-granted by most participants.

In contrast to a bureaucratically structured label for her or for her problems, a women walking into WEC may say she feels upset today because her rent payment is due, or simply that she is tired and wants to sit down and have a coffee. Further discussion and contemplation may find that a long sequence of events, decisions, people, and meanings have brought her to this

moment of 'feeling upset.' Some of the underlying causes may go back generations and involve larger issues of immigration policy, educational opportunities, and inheritance laws and practices. Only one part of the feelings she expresses is related to the fact that she needs money to make the world stop bothering her and to access the things she must have on a daily basis to survive and be comfortable.

Somehow this visitor (and all the other women who interact with WEC) must have her "lived actuality" translated by WEC staff and volunteers into "factual accounts." Her complicated, intense and contradiction-laden life must be reduced to a few paragraphs or a couple of numbers. A limited number of 'presenting problems' must be identified and documented. This woman must be made into a 'client' rather than a peer or an equal and dynamic participant in the process of survival and resistance. No funders allocate money simply to help vaguely unhappy women become vividly happy women. From the funder's perspective, a woman walking into WEC should become "a client from one of our three target groups," and there must be a documented measurable problem that is definitively solved in measurable ways if our funders are to have their uneasiness subside. (And remember if their uneasiness does not subside we are sent away from the masters' tables with no scraps.)

These "factual accounts" involve social organization. Such knowledge must be produced so that WEC can continue receiving money for rent, staff's wages, the phone bill and for resources and supplies. We require office space and at least at least one staff so that we can effectively visit, share, talk, feel understand and care about each other. Our "lived reality" has to be made into a factual account that funders recognize. What is the process involved in the production of the factual account? How do we make our many and far away blind masters see us?

THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE PRODUCTION OF THE FACTUAL ACCOUNT

Every year governmental and non-governmental funding sources create a multitude of pamphlets that can be defined as 'texts.' Pamphlets can be thought of as textual accounts that 'stand in' for the work of government employees. In Smith's method for exploring and understanding the world around us texts:

...are analyzed to display what the subject knows how to do as reader and what the subject knows how to do in reading, and in so doing also displays the organizing capacity of the text, its capacity to operate as a constituent of social relations (Smith, 1990b:5).

The funders mail pamphlets and request forms to various non-profit organizations yearly, explaining potentially applicable programs, resources and services. Sometimes WEC women find pamphlets and request forms at other agencies, at conferences and rallies, or through friends. On other occasions, one funding agency's representative or project officer will give us the pamphlet of another agency in what we often perceive as a bid to be rid of us. For example, a woman's problems will sometimes be defined as a provincial responsibility by a federally funded organization and a provincially funded organization may define a woman's problems as a federal responsibility.

Each of these pamphlets and forms are passed around from hand to hand by the volunteers and staff in the organization. Individual women may offer some interpretation of what these documents mean. Women who handle the documents attempt to connect that specific pamphlet and request form with 'gossip' she may possess regarding other organizations and what they are applying for this year. Such information is picked up at parties, rallies and gatherings, the news, or from discussions with project officers (note 'project officers' are not called 'funding facilitators') in previous years. The documents may be compared with last year's documents. Each woman attempts to answer the question, "What does the funder specifically *want* to hear and

can we legally say what they want to hear so we can get some money?" At a more sophisticated level, we could say that these women are engaged in the process of organizing the production of a factual account.

As part of this process of producing a factual account, a pamphlet and funding request form with some of its cumulative 'gossip' floats around the office. Eventually the pamphlet and request form lands on one person's mail shelf. This person may never before have interacted with potential funders. She may never before have been involved in these types of formal bureaucratic activities. WEC's philosophy is that all women should have opportunities to develop their skills in all spheres of the organization's work. By involving herself in applying for money, a woman may feel like she is accepting an enormous and frightening responsibility. Every time I have consented to apply for a grant I have felt somewhat like a midget warrior chasing a Goliath.

40 Sometimes the person in charge of the pamphlet is someone who has done other funding requests for WEC or for other organizations. Occasionally this is a person who has two or three funding proposals in process at the same time. As a result of the available woman-power at WEC, this woman is likely to be alone for most of the duration of the process. This can eventually lead to the resentment or, alternatively, the adoration of the other WEC activists. This person frequently finds both positive and negative feelings become directed toward her. The woman in charge of the pamphlet, rather than the actual potential funder, often becomes the target of WEC women's most intense emotions and scrutiny. Frequently she is silently judged on the cash success or failure of her work, rather than the energy output and personal risks she has taken during the sequence of discovery and negotiation. Many times I have witnessed people displaying and projecting strong emotions on the bearer of good or bad news about funding. These disruptive dynamics can come about because not all women understand all the parts of the process.

The person in charge of the pamphlet is frequently the co-ordinator (she may have been the one to initially receive the pamphlet and decide that it was a 'go'). She may also be a Board member. What every her title, she will

probably make a phone call to the office from which that the pamphlet emerged (Employment and Immigration Canada, Secretary Of State, Citizenship, Ontario Women's Directorate, Northern Mines And Development, etc.). More questions will be asked. Clarification regarding our 'appropriateness' for this funding will be sought. This is a very time consuming and energy draining process. It is my belief, and the belief of many of WEC's funding activists, that this is not accidentally designed this way. Only the tenacious survive this stage of the process.

Eventually the woman in charge of the pamphlet might ascertain that the program advertised is not applicable to WEC. It may be that we have already missed the deadline to apply (application intake deadlines sometimes arbitrarily change from year to year). Deadlines are an interesting component of this process because the pamphlets are usually issued only after the funder's policies, agendas, priorities and plans for the new fiscal year are known.⁶ Whatever criteria existed last year do not necessarily exist this year.

Once the funder has decided on this year's criteria, the pamphlets are then issued and the requests must be completed usually within a month or two of the printing of pamphlets. This means little lead time is allocated to organizations like WEC. We often find out a funding possibility exists only one or two weeks before the deadline for submissions. Rigid and short time frames have consequences for the organization and its activists.

Also, tight time frames encourage women to work as solo individuals in the process because waiting until the next monthly meeting of the collective group of WEC activists could mean missing the funder's designated deadline. Individual work often means that women feel they should get all the recognition when or if the money does arrive, and it means women who do not succeed in securing funding may feel that they are personal failures and could have done more. Further, less knowledge about the funding application process is shared when women work in isolation. These processes can sometimes serve to decrease the group's feelings of harmony and solidarity.

While contemplating the consequences of deadlines and time sequencing, it is important to remember that almost all women in charge of pamphlets and

funding applications are volunteers who hold down full-time jobs, raise children, take night classes, have households to run, and are often unfamiliar with the funding process. Expecting women to organize a whole proposal over the course of a week, or even a few weeks, is imposing very high and often unrealistic expectations. The complexity of women's personal lives is erased from the process.

There are complications other than tight time frames. When a new pamphlet has been received and someone attempts to follow up its implications for WEC, it is possible they will discover that because we are already receiving one type of funding we are ineligible for another. It is often discovered that because we have received a particular type of funding in the past, we will not be 'appropriate' for a potential program this year. For example, our experience with local representatives of the Secretary of State suggests that they prefer that we define ourselves as offering programs *either* for 'women' or 'multicultural' people. We are not supposed to receive funding in any given fiscal year for responding to *both* women's and multicultural people's needs. Given our mission statement and what we do in practice, this is an oddity around which we have felt compelled to navigate. This type of funding suggests that we must 'splinter' women's identities.

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The WEC volunteer trying to decode and assess the meaning of the pamphlet (remember these pamphlets are active texts that 'stand in' for the funders) may find that we can apply for a certain program but that far too much work is required and not enough woman power available. Sometimes the perceived gain for WEC is far outweighed by the potential output of effort. For example, dozens of hours of application and documentation work as well as time setting up a program may be required to receive only five hundred dollars.

It is often discovered that the programs or resources advertised in the pamphlet are actually a 'sham.' A woman in charge of a pamphlet can find out that the money being offered must be matched with equal dollars—dollars which we are 'magically' supposed to generate from membership donations or raise from the community! For example, five thousand dollars might be

available for computer purchases *only* if five thousand dollars are first raised from our clients, the community and volunteers. To raise money means that we are somewhat obliged to engage in activities like fees for services, bake sales, beauty make-over days, fashion shows and dances. It is obvious how these activities have the potential to reshape activist's attitudes and feelings.

If these dead-end outcomes are identified, the pamphlet and funding request form are then filed or thrown away and forgotten. If we 'do not fit' the funder's desires, we almost always forget about the application rather than challenge why the funder's program does not suit us. If the potential funder's program is a 'sham,' we rarely challenge why it is being advertised and promoted. If the program is a mandatory community fund matching program, we sometimes blame ourselves and ponder why we have not been more successful in our community fund-raising efforts and in our efforts to extract fees from our clients.

If we do challenge the process, we inevitably do so only internally (within WEC over coffee and closed meetings) as an intellectual exercise. We are usually afraid to use the media, to phone politicians, or to challenge the process in more overt and radical ways. We are afraid to make our distant masters angry with us. We have been well trained to take the responsibilities for our 'failure' in a world where the rules of the game have been made up by White men who are largely untouched by issues like child-care, poverty, violence, sexual assaults, unemployment, racism, or isolation. Most of us have learned to be polite, silent and grateful. The pamphlets set out most of the limits we must maintain. Project officers set out additional limits. Project officers will say things like "your application was a good first attempt and if you resubmit next year with the appropriate changes (or additions or information) we will give your request serious consideration," or "there were too many requests ahead of yours this time." These responses lead us to feel that if we are 'good and patient girls' nice things might happen to us in the future.

If it does seem that we *might be eligible* for some funding, the agency contact person will continue brain-storming to assess how WEC might

present itself to meet the criteria of the potential funder. We will make ourselves fit and/or *appear* to fit the funder's criteria. Much discussion might take place among WEC women over meetings, lunches and mid-night phone calls. Informants from other organizations may be enlisted to share whatever knowledge they have about this funding source. People will go to lunch together and talk—like sharing 'dirty' secrets. We do not ask why accessing public funds to address women's day-to-day discomforts should make us feel like we are stealing scraps from the master's tables. We do not openly challenge why we must do hundreds of hours of volunteer work to prepare ourselves to ask for funds to provide safety, security, comfort, and basic life resources to ordinary women.

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WEC has to prove its worth and establish its identity to the representatives of any potential funding body. All new organizations have to go through this stage but WEC is particularly disadvantaged because of its philosophy, legal mission statement, and the group of women that are drawn to it. WEC has had to prove its worth over and over again to the same funders. The first stages of communication are very difficult with some funders because they do not see racism, sexism or classism as real issues in Canadian society. Some of these funders will not even meet with us until we have sent them huge envelopes filled with documents. Some funders will not even mail out application request forms until we have sent them what they define as appropriate documentation. WEC documents will be pulled from the files and photocopied to prepare for the next stage in the application process.

Almost all funders want to see our constitution, by-laws, financial statements, projected budget, and relevant job descriptions. Frequently funders want the resumes of all Board and staff members. In my eight years of experience, I have never witnessed or heard about a project officer volunteering to send their resumes to us. Neither have I witnessed, nor heard about, a women's organization representative demanding to see a funder's resumé.

Funders will require support letters from agencies which are defined as 'relevant' (i.e. defined as relevant through the possibility of sharing clients,

previously addressing these concerns, etc.). Funders decide who is relevant and not relevant in terms of letters of support. Usually the funder requests letters of support from agencies which might in fact be competitors for the scraps from the master's table. It is *against* these competitor agency's own best financial interests to support *our* request. All these documents and interactions help constitute the practices involved in creating "the factual account." These practices are the same for agencies wanting government or government 'wannabe' (United Way, Trillium, etc.) funds. None of the funders have to prove themselves to us. They never have to prove their right to interrogate us.⁷

These forms and processes are designed extra-locally by White, middle-class, university-educated, Canadian-born men. They are administered locally almost exclusively by White, middle-class, Canadian-born, university-educated women. Only once have I interacted with a local funder who was not White and middle-class. The form's designers and administrators always have some background in book-keeping or accounting. WEC's staff, clients, and volunteers are largely Immigrant, First Nations and Visible Minority, working-class, high-school or college-educated women. WEC's women almost never have any previous exposure to formal book-keeping or accounting knowledge. Forms are designed for administrative convenience, for computer compatibility, or other reasons that have nothing to do with the real living struggling women who must fill them in at WEC. These differences in class, ethnic, and educational background are not explicitly recognized by the funders' insidiously dictated process but have an implicit consequence for WEC. We must play by their rules and fill in the blanks they constructed without consultation.

I have had many discussions with women while these forms were filled. If WEC women were designing these forms they would be much simpler, easier to understand, include more qualitative data, and would be designed with the assumption that we are trustworthy beings authentically doing everything we can to help other women with their messy and 'ordinary' day-to-day problems. Funder's forms assume we are not doing the work we

promise we will, that what we are doing is not work, or that it is not something that should be done. If WEC women were designing the forms, we would assume that if last year a number of women wanted to talk about incest, rape, violence, poverty, unemployment, etc., there would also be women this year with the same concerns. If WEC women were designing the forms, there might be one form for all the funders that was done once yearly and updated what we wanted to do next year.

Funders change their priorities and issues year to year. In the funders' realities there has been the 'year of the disabled,' the 'year of the First Nations woman,' the 'year against wife assault,' etc. When WEC representatives attempt to explain that there is no such thing as a problem-of-the-year because a 'problem' does not last only a year, we are not understood. When we express these ideas, the project officers may respond by saying that another funder must pay for any further work that needs to be done on that social problem, that all that can be done has now already been done, or that another agency is doing that work.

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Sometimes the responsibility will be turned around and projected onto us; why were we unsuccessful in solving that problem last year when we were paid for solving it? WEC women's definition of reality—the problems and the needs of women, what has happened in the past and what should happen in the future—is thereby defined as 'invalid.' Policy is constructed elsewhere by statisticians and accountants in Ottawa and Toronto who define what is knowledge and what is worth recognizing and rewarding.

WEC women who have been the contact person for funding proposals have often commented to me that they felt like they were being judged by project officers as being guilty of a crime of which they never knew they were accused or guilty. Although he does not profess to be describing the funding request process, the feelings of inexplicable guilt and negative judgement are well described by Kafka in his haunting and surrealistic book *The Trial*. In one passage from *The Trial*, the accused describes the system's whimsical contortions and the helplessness of the victim. The accused is thinking about her situation:⁸

It was all very regrettable, but not wholly without justification. K. must remember that the proceedings were not public; they could certainly, if the Court considered it necessary, become public, but the Law did not prescribe that they must be made public. Naturally, therefore, the legal records of the case, and above all the actual charge-sheets, were inaccessible to the accused and her counsel, consequently one did not know in general, or at least did not know with any precision, what charges to meet in the first plea; accordingly it could be only by pure chance that it contained really relevant matter. One could draw up genuinely effective and convincing pleas only later on, when the separate charges and the evidence on which they were based emerged more definitely or could be guessed at from the interrogations. (Kafka, 1968, 115)

An example of these whimsical contortions expected from the funders can be found in the funder's desire that different forms be filled with detailed quantitative data. Their forms focus on financial accountability and on documenting how women's problems can be segmented and time-tracked. The forms come to be experienced by WEC women and project officers as having a life of their own. They come to be extensions of a master's body, somewhat like fingers groping out in the dark to touch us, explore our contours, understand us and reshape us.

THE FACTUAL ACCOUNT

Factual accounts which produce the image (mirage) of financial accountability, problem segmentation, time-tracking, and professionalism must be constructed for potential funders if WEC wants to be recognized. WEC's constitution, by-laws, financial statements, budget projections, minutes of meetings, etc., are added to the actual grant proposal form and the memos from the local project officer with the support letters from other agencies in the community. The WEC contact person will be kept very uneasy and busy collecting, creating and refining documents. This cumulative pile of docu-

ments forms the factual account of who WEC is and what WEC does. This final 'kit' is assessed and assembled with the local project officer. The editing and amending of 'facts' may go on for months. In the end, the request form and supporting documents are 'submitted' to the granting agency. Months may go by before an answer is received from our seemingly unknowable masters who are geographically and philosophically far away.

Sometimes the answer that eventually trickles down to the WEC representative is that some vital piece of information is missing and that if it is produced the application will then be reconsidered. However, the request for missing information is routinely unmanageable. For example, if a funder asked, "What percentage of the women clients seen in the past two years have been full status First Nations women?", we would not be able to provide an answer. We do not ask that kind of information during intake or at any other point in our interactions with each other. "Full Status First Nations" is a legal concept with no real practical meaning for us.

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Sometimes the application is rejected somewhere between our community, Toronto, or Ottawa. A vague and coded explanation from a master or a master's helper explains the reason for rejection. Rejections have come to us with statements like "this project has inadequate community support." We are not allowed to know those who were contacted in the community and do not support us. The voices that are defined as 'credible' to assess our application do not necessarily include First Nations unemployed cleaning ladies or illiterate Italian immigrant bake store clerks. The women who are activists at WEC are not necessarily defined by project officers or administrators as credible sources of 'support' because they are 'biased.' People who do not use our services or who are not familiar with our organization are defined as 'credible professionals' with a knowledgeable opinion.

THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE READING OF THE FACTUAL ACCOUNT

The social organization of reading the factual accounts takes place during different stages of grant proposal applications. The women at WEC have

discovered and stored knowledge about how pamphlets are meant to be read, what should or should not be written into applications, and what should or should not be said during interviews with project officers. For example, a WEC co-ordinator told me that a year after the Oka crisis a project officer told her to downplay the fact that WEC has First Nations women mentioned in our literature and mission statement. To have emphasized First Nations women's significance in our organization would have deprived us of funding during that intake period.

WEC women know to never use words and phrases like 'patriarchy,' 'socialist,' 'feminist,' and 'exploitation of women.' Instead we used words and phrases like 'unassertive women,' 'women with low self-esteem,' 'low income women,' 'concerned about women,' and 'underdeveloped skills of women.' As a consequence of our interactions with representatives of funding sources and through reading the material supplied by funding sources, we have developed a loosely shared body of knowledge which has taught us to openly place the blame on our women participants/clients for their problems. By doing so, we can sell the work of 'fixing' them to different representatives of the federal and provincial government. We can turn them into 'pieces' or 'projects.' WEC becomes represented as a factory in which activists and staff can do 'piece work' on an assembly line. We may be gradually seduced and colluded into blaming the victim. Sometimes, some of us come to believe the 'truths' and 'facts' they have indoctrinated us to produce. In this process, the relations of ruling are obscured. Instead of being the revolutionaries we originally dreamed of becoming, we are in danger of becoming polite and busy agents of the state.

Project officers know (in a rough and transitional way) what is expected of them by their supervisors and by the signing authorities in Ottawa or Toronto. WEC's money is not decisively allocated locally. Each level of administration, from Northern Ontario to Ottawa and back, has a common language. Each square on each form has an almost consensually recognized meaning and expected response. The parameters are almost always defined, understood and unquestioned. At WEC we learned to put our desires into the

language of these funding masters or they simply will not be aware that we exist or that there are problems to which they must allocate resources. We sometimes ask them for money to use in our process of actively resisting their authority; if this is made too clear, they will obviously not want to fund our work.⁹

“WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED/WHAT IS”

When WEC was created in 1988, a group of women came together to brainstorm about what we thought were the issues and problems confronting ethnocultural minority women in our community. We were all Immigrant, Visible Minority, First Nations, feminists, and/or working-class women with a spontaneous and passionate desire to bring about some changes in our lives and the lives of the women who were our friends and neighbours. I never missed a meeting because they were exciting and stimulating.

50 As far as the founding mothers of WEC knew in 1988, there were no hard ‘facts’ in our community. There were anecdotal pieces of information, personal testimonies, and the impressions of the activists. Some statistics from Canada Employment and Immigration about how many women might be defined as belonging to this or that ethnocultural group were also available. Finally, there was some historical documentation about which groups of women came to this geographical area during which years and why. For the five years that WEC has been in operation, it has increasingly become a centre in which knowledge about “what actually happened/what is” is created. WEC is in the process of initiating and solidifying a certain knowledge of ‘reality’ that will be the base from which other organizations, activists, individuals, researchers, and funders will begin their work. Almost all the women who founded WEC in 1988 have moved away or moved on. As a consequence of the stresses and strains on their lives, they have usually been unable to regularly volunteer with WEC. New women have come forward who have not shared the same vivid vision. They have arrived and been introduced to our activities through government produced texts and through the literature we have produced at WEC. Their initiation has given them the versions of reality

that the funders receive—the versions of reality that the funders want us to create. New volunteers are vulnerable to believing that this version is the only ‘truth,’ when in fact it has been created for an external and unsympathetic viewer. WEC, it might be said, is now increasingly expanding into the business of fact production.

The textually produced and socially organized ‘facts’ are assumed to be the same as what really happens in the day-to-day lives of women who visit and work at WEC. The many mid-term and final project reports produced for funders supports this continuing telling of the story. Only one version of the story seems possible to each funder. For example, Canada Employment and Immigration can only absorb a story about how women were “employment disadvantaged” before they interacted with WEC “fully employed or unemployed” when then concluded their time with WEC. Canada Employment and Immigration forms are unable to absorb a story that involves rape, incest or anything else that has, in their boundaries of the story, nothing to do with employment issues.

Only one version of one story will be absorbed, recognized and responded to by each funder. No schema exists for multiple and changing possibilities. Eventually the schema that funders and WEC women use may become identical. Some of WEC’s activists not only come to know and reproduce the funder’s story about “what actually happened/what is,” but we often come to believe that it is our “lived actuality.”

For example, in the recent past one of our funders provided thirty thousand dollars to organize a two-part conference about “anti-racism and women working in coalition.” This project became the whole agency’s priority. Thirty thousand dollars is an enormous amount of money for us (our yearly budget has been between thirty-thousand and one-hundred thousand dollars). No paid staff exist for counselling women. No paid staff exist for advocating on behalf of and escorting women to access social services. These activities must be done by volunteers. When the agency was approached to organize the conference, all our volunteers were assigned to the task. Less collective and individual energy was invested in actually encouraging,

counselling and escorting women. The funder underfunded us to produce the conference. Not enough wages were allocated to organize what we were coerced into saying we would. Volunteers were pulled in to accomplish the goal we contracted to finish. Had we not organized this conference we would not have had rent money or a telephone. We had no choice. To remain financially viable, we must exist with at least one master asking us to fill in the blanks and squares that he has decided need to be filled.

For a time—and without any of us explicitly discussing it—it became a ‘fact’ among the women at WEC that we should all pull together to get the conference organized. It became a ‘fact’ that we did not have time for volunteers to do research, counselling, escorting, because they should be working on the conference. This fact comes to be understood, unchallenged, and taken-for-granted. The funders, through their infiltration of our collective mind with their priorities, their definitions of success, of what is work, and what are the problems of ethnocultural minority women in our community are have implicated us in the production of ‘facts.’ These ‘facts’ often come to be what women at WEC know, act in response to, struggle with, and impose on each other.

Smith (1990) also plays with imagery of wolves and their subsistence. Smith’s image of wolves and caribou seems to fit my experience as an activist at WEC who tried to understand how we participate in knowing, producing and accepting ‘facts’:

Facts mediate relations not only between knower and known but among knowers and the object known in common. Notice, next time you see that movie of wolves hunting caribou, how they attend to one another through the medium of their object. Each is oriented to that caribou and through that to each other. Thus they coordinate the hunt. A fact is such an object; it is the caribou that coordinates the activities of members of a discourse, a bureaucracy, a management, a profession. A fact is construed to be external to the particular subjectivities of the knowers. It is the same for anyone, external to anyone, and unlike the real caribou

and the real wolves, is fixed, devoid of perspective, in the same relation to anyone. It coordinates the activities of anyone who is positioned to read and has mastered the interpretive procedures it intends and relies on. (Smith, 1990:69)

Smith explains the dynamics through which knowledge becomes objectified and how 'facts' come to be different from our lived experience. Smith's proposed dynamics are clearly relevant to an understanding of the funding process at WEC. WEC activists might be likened to the wolves. The caribou might be seen as the facts (facts related to accessing the money we need to continue our work or something like the work we originally wanted to do). These facts also organize our project officers and each of the administrators above them (our distant disinterested masters).

Smith's six components that comprise the social organization of the textual reality intermingle and tangle. An ideological loop is created that can be breached at any point, but rarely in day-to-day practice. There is the authentic actuality which is gradually rearranged during the social organization of the production of the factual account. A factual account is read by an audience (in the context of WEC the audience is constituted by the funding agency's representatives, WEC volunteers and staff, clients and peer organization's representatives, project officers, etc.) and assumed to be what actually happened or what is. The factual account becomes a taken-for-granted and shared definition of reality. The reading and hearing of the factual account has been shaped by the surrounding social organization. We (the funding representatives, WEC staff and activists) are continually implicated participants in this ongoing process.

There are no tyrants or conspiracies, although it has felt like this to me when I sat across from a project officer who explained why WEC could not be funded or when I received a rejection letter from a potential funding source. These processes and dynamics are aspects of modern, textually mediated, large organizations and state practices. WEC's volunteers and participants experience many of the same conflicts and contradictions as volunteers and

participants in hundreds of other small government funded organizations across Canada.

In the first years of WEC's existence, we continually met in ad hoc spontaneously arranged groups and asked each other, 'What do you want to do today?', 'What are we here for?', 'What should we do next?', 'How do you feel?', 'What hurts you and what can I do right here and right now to make you feel better?' Now, we have titles (such as 'staff' versus 'board,' 'President' versus 'member-at-large,' etc.) and usually meet in previously scheduled meetings where we create agendas and ask each other different questions. We ask, 'What do the funders want us to do today?', 'What has each funder scheduled for us and what are the target dates?', 'What report or proposal must be written next?', 'What are the funders granting priority to this year?', 'How much money do we have in our general account?' and 'What will our next fund-raising event be?'

In addition to asking different questions, we no longer have much time to even ask questions. The women are often aware of the tensions and the contradictions, but they proceed because there is little time for reflection, and it seems that everyone else is proceeding. The pace has been set. None of the funders are keen on funding 'consciousness raising sessions for board members so that they can resist all levels of oppressions.'

In summary, I have explored parts of the process of the government funding of a grassroots ethnocultural minority women's centre in Northern Ontario. The women from WEC have now successfully negotiated project funding from five different federal and provincial sources. Among government sources, we have received financial support from (in order of largest contributions) Canada Employment and Immigration, the Secretary of State Multicultural Division, the Secretary of State Women's Division, Citizenship (provincial), and Northern Mines and Development.

We also receive funds from Trillium, the United Way, Oxfam, Nevada sales, Bingos, membership fees, and through community fund-raising activities (T-shirt sales, craft sales, and other events). United Way and Trillium are government 'wannabes.' Their forms and funding processes are experienced

by small agencies like WEC as often being more extensive, intrusive, and controlling than government funding bodies. Trillium, United Way and Oxfam seem to expect us to rely enormously on volunteers and expect us to keep statistics and extensive documentation of our activities. These are the same expectations that government project officers demand. In return, these government 'wannabes' might allocate as little as five hundred to a thousand dollars to per year. Most years, they have had no funds to offer us because they have not reached their year's target or because we had not existed long enough for them to consider us.

Trillium, United Way, and Oxfam application processes and Nevada and Bingo licensing processes are all adapted and shaped by the funding processes of federal and provincial governments either directly or indirectly. Government 'wannabes' seem to have become part of the participants in creating and recreating a taken-for-granted reality. The forms for these different funding processes, the mid-year reports, the accounting procedures that are expected, the legal documenting of how funds are spent, and the ways in which face-to-face mid-term and final assessment meetings are conducted emerge from and reflect the standards set by provincial and federal government funding sources.

At WEC we are fortunate that we have evolved into an organization that can raise a small portion of its resources through non-government sources. These other funding sources allow us to exist. I would *like* to be able to say that because we do raise some non-government controlled money we do not have our every movement controlled by one or another master. I am unsure that this is the case. I believe that we use our community raised funds to subsidize the work that government masters originally underfund us to do. We use these 'discretionary funds' to patch the day-to-day holes and gaps in our activities and programs that the federal and provincial governments refuse to recognize or fund.

Women at WEC can only rarely escape the masters' scrutiny and return to being the people we originally wanted to be. Our masters are gradually making us into dwarfed and crippled wolves, and we are gradually organizing

ourselves to fit around the movements of the caribou herd. We are becoming accidental (from our perspective) representatives of the State. This process was documented by Ng (1988) in her observations of an state-funded organization designed to address immigrant women's employment needs. Eventually, the organization changed its focus and addressed the needs of employers and Canada Employment and Immigration. Ng says:

As a result of its funding arrangement, the employment agency now entered into a sub-contractual relationship with the state. The funding protocol was such that the agency had to produce a 'product' for the state in return for funding. The nature and parameter of this 'product' was defined by a legal contract, signed by a board of directors, who were legally accountable to the state and the 'public' for the agency's financial welfare. As such, they became the internal representatives of the state within the agency. (Ng, 1988:12)

Regrettably Ng's fatalistic summary of the patterns she witnessed seem to be beginning to play themselves out at WEC. Walker (1990) presents her analysis of the battered women's shelter movement with a similarly disenchanting and disenchanting tone. She describes how the funding process, the documentation process, and the resulting 'professionalization' contributed to the de-radicalization of the battered women's movement.

This paper has attempted to explain how funding shapes who we are, what we can do, and who we may become at WEC from my perspective as a fascinated witness. In the way WEC women playing out the consequences of funding, we are not unique. The daily acts, steps, discussions, documentation, and resource allocations that government and government 'wannabe' representatives demand help define how we at WEC come to see ourselves. External funding realities are coming to define how we interact with each other (staff/Board/participant/client) within the organization. It seems to me that we have come to believe that these funders or potential funders are our

masters. We have come to believe that we must cater to all of their overtly and covertly declared desires and demands.

We have, and have had, many seemingly distant, disinterested and foreign-tongued masters. They want us to put our requests into their formats, visit them in their territory, tire ourselves with obscure tricks for their benefit, and learn to speak their language.

When an organization like WEC has many masters it can be both an advantage and a disadvantage. It is an advantage in that we can continue to exist because one or another master throws us scraps. It is a disadvantage because each of these masters reinforce each other's demands and expectations. Alternatively, if we had only one master we would have to be more obedient and we would be more vulnerable. It is a disadvantage to have many masters because we always have to be vigilant about incurring one master's anger for having been too attendant to another's desires. Having many masters also complicates our lives and our work because there are more documents to produce, competing demands to cater to, and many more meetings to attend. In some ways, it does not matter how many masters we have because they are all training us in the same way—teaching us to cringe and whimper or to march obediently leashed at their sides.

I resist concluding this paper on too cynical a note in spite of what Ng, Walker, Smith and others make visible. Maybe I am resisting out of some Pollyanna-type learning disability. I do not think of myself as a zombie-like agent of the state who is energetically participating in the oppression of women. WEC, by existing at all, is a manifestation of resistance. As our legal mission statement says, we are "enhancing the lives and expanding the options of Immigrant, Visible Minority and First Nations women." Even if the "enhancement and expansion" is minor and incremental, it is nevertheless an accomplishment. Whatever space and resources we do wrestle from government funders and government 'wannabes' is *that much less space or resources* that conservative forces get to keep and utilize. Whatever we can do in a day-to-day way that helps some women feel more comfortable in the world is worth doing. Some of us have our consciousness raised, in spite of

forces that would block that, and we share those special moments of insight and solidarity. Some of us gain the knowledge and leave WEC and apply it elsewhere.

Some of us come to reflect on why the funders structure their relationships with us as they do. My thoughts on this are that women could form a powerful coalition (especially feminist organizations that explicitly work on anti-racist issues), but by dividing us through the funding process funders can conquer us, exhaust us, and can confuse us. At WEC we have been unsuccessful in finding alternative sources of funding that would have 'revolutionary potential.' We have turned to raising funds through bake sales, fashion shows and beauty make-over days. These events have drawn surprisingly large numbers of women to our doors, but they have also had an impact on our identity as a group. In these times when government funding is becoming harder and harder to access, will WEC become freer and freer as it receives less? No, I do not believe we will become freer and bolder with less government support because the pool of women supporters is too few in this geographic community. There are simply not enough ethnocultural minority women with large sums of cash and time to devote to WEC to nourish us adequately. There are not enough White anglophone Canadian-born women who feel that racism is 'their' issue. Their resources are more likely to be committed to other 'sister' organizations. Men have not come forward in large enough numbers to volunteer their resources. Less government funding brings WEC closer to closing its doors.

Lorde (1984:112) states:

...survival is not an academic skill. It is learning how to stand alone, unpopular and sometimes reviled, and how to make common cause with those others identified as outside the structures in order to define and seek a world in which we can all flourish....

This idea is a key theme at WEC. We are learning to make our differences into strengths and we are learning to insist that we be recognized and validated. Lorde (1982:112) continues by saying:

...the masters tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change. And this fact is only threatening to those women who still define the master's house as their only source of support.

Unfortunately, it seems that at this time WEC must look to the many servants and representatives of the master and masters themselves for support. We can strive to maintain and reinvigorate our consciousness of the process we are engaged in so that we may remain alert for opportunities to resist and to take more of our fair share. We can work harder to insure that each woman who comes into the organization is taught how to critically evaluate that in which she is engaged. This seems to be our only terrain of battle over which we can have the possibility of control. Gradually we are discovering alternative ways to survive financially, but at this, our five year anniversary, we must sometimes settle for just scraps. Even in attempting to get the most scraps possible and to use them as effectively as possible, I feel we are trying to be brave wolves. If we were less brave we could settle for nothing and this nothingness would make our masters too comfortable.

NOTES

1. This paper is only an exploratory work-in-progress. My doctoral thesis, which builds on this paper, involves semi-structured interviews with thirty women who have been activists in WEC. A central theme of my thesis is the multiple and layered meaning of funding (how women resist and conform to the expectations of funders).
2. This is a pseudonym.
3. In the thesis I will do a much more extensive analysis of documents. Here I am only presenting my subjective experiences of the whole process. My approach, which developed while being a student of Dorothy Smith in 1992, is that we must always begin our research process from where we actually live, breathe and act in the world. This paper was written for her class and her comments and insights, which are now assimilated into this paper, are gratefully appreciated.

4. I recognize that some women may feel uncomfortable with a white anglophone Canadian born woman using the word 'master' in this way. I have chosen to use this word because it was chosen for the title of the session (Learneds, 1993, Women's Studies) for which this paper was originally adapted, because it is a word that seems to 'fit' the experience we have at WEC, and because I use it in the way Audre Lorde (1984) does.

5. What I am attempting to point out here is that there is nothing intrinsically wrong, different or inadequate about women who find these labels imposed on them. These are women who are as intelligent, as hard-working, as creative and educated as middle-class women and/or White anglophone Canadian-born women (who would not utilize WEC's services). However, the former have not had the privileges of accessing social resources and opportunities. Sometimes women who are disadvantaged are portrayed by funders and social service agencies as having some obvious intrinsic flaw or inadequacy.

6. Financial years are different for different representatives of the government. For example, Canada Employment and Immigration accepts applications for funding in December, considers them in January but does not actually allocate funds until February. The Secretary of State accepts applications in January but does not allocate funds until April. The Secretary of State will not accept an application until the previously funded projects have had their final reports accepted. Therefore, between the spending of the last dollar from the last project and the receipt of the first dollar for the next year's project, there will usually be a time lag of about three months if all has been done efficiently and appropriately. WEC's financial year begins on April 1. Citizenship accepts funding proposals four times a year and seems to be organized on a first come first serve basis. Northern Mines and Development accepts proposals at any time but first the proposal must have been rejected by all other possible sources. So, for example, if WEC wanted to buy a computer first we have to have asked Secretary of State, United Way, and other sources (who these 'other sources' are is defined by Northern Mines and Development).

7. One of WEC's previous Co-ordinator's, Teena Lacoste, commented on this passage in the following way: "An argument could be made to turn the tables here. Why not have the potential funders interrogated? Why not say to them 'We have this program we want to run. We have been looking for a potential funder. We will entertain the possibility of considering your funding. But before we can determine whether it is desirable to us to have you as a funder we want to know what your vision is. What are your goals? Ultimately we at WEC have a sacred responsibility to our women and only the most accountable funder can be associated with the work we do.' We should turn exclusivity on its ear."

8. Here I have taken the liberty of changing the gender of the accused.
9. For example, over the years we have participated in demonstrations like road blocks, sit-ins, and letter writing campaigns against Secretary of State and Canada Employment and Immigration while our rent and wages were being paid by them.

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Myths on the Left: The Narrative and Discursive Practices of the *AFL-CIO News*

François Huot
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The question that presents itself is what, if any, differences are there between the ultimate objectives of organized industry and those of organized labor? Suppose we pierce through the flaming slogans, noble writings and dramatic stories and look into the purposes and the philosophy of the organized labor movement in terms of its contrast to the character of organized capital. (Alinsky, 1969:26)

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Maybe it is because progressive academics can always remember a verse or two from a Woody Guthrie song or because they cannot make old images of striking Wobblies disappear, but the number of studies of the ideological practices of the labour movement remains surprisingly low. Even if a general mistrust of labor organizations exists in left-wing circles, trade-unions are often constructed as fundamentally 'good' organizations in which little ideological or symbolical manipulation is actually taking place. The defense of the oppressed, the nobleness of purpose and the trade-unions' democratic pretension are seen as safeguards preventing this eventuality (Guérard, 1987:1994).

I believe, however, that ideological work is taking place 'on the Left' and that Alinsky's question still needs to be asked. Are the American trade-

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unions really different from organized industry? Which forms of ideological and symbolical manipulation are being used inside the labour movement? I intend to bring a preliminary answer to these questions by looking at a cultural production of American labour and by conducting an analysis of the narrative and the discursive practices of the *AFL-CIO News*, a biweekly newspaper distributed to the unions' officers, employees and subscribing members.¹ However, before going any further, it is important to introduce the theoretical perspectives on ideology which allow for the examination of 'left-wing' practices and justify the selection of a labour newspaper as the object of analysis.

IDEOLOGY: FROM REPRESENTATION TO SOCIAL PRACTICES

When René Descartes defined the fundamental dichotomy between the mental process and the natural world (mind and body, subject and object), he also laid the groundwork that allowed for the conceptualization of ideology as a set of ideas or, to borrow from Althusser (1971), "representations." In classical Marxist thought, which must be situated inside this Cartesian paradigm, ideology can only be defined as the imaginary (false) representation of real (exterior) conditions of existence. From this perspective, two basic assumptions emerge: first, the discovery of a true or valid representation is possible and second, ideology cannot exist 'on the Left' because what is created there, according to Marxist theory, is an exact representation of one's conditions of existence.

In the semiological formulation, on the contrary, meaning never simply reflects the 'real.' Meaning is carried by the sign which is created when persons, connect a signifier and a signified (de Saussure, 1959). The creation of meaning appears as an individual process, but this does not imply a guarantee of total freedom: "We are not free to determine these relations [between signifier and signified] as we please: we are a part of a prearranged semiological world" (Lewis, 1991: 30). As Angus and Jhally (1989:2) point out: "People create their own meaning, but as Marx noted, 'not in conditions of their own choosing'."

The mobilization of this prearranged world of signification is the domain of ideological work. Thus, as Thompson (1984:131) suggests, "[t]o study ideology is to study the ways in which meaning (or signification) serves to sustain relations of domination." This connection of meaning to the social order permits the transformation of the notion of ideology from a concept of internal ideas, into one of social practices. As Althusser notes, "certain notions have purely and simply disappeared from our presentation, whereas others on the contrary survive, and new terms appear...practices, rituals, ideological apparatus" (1971:159). These concepts open the door to the examination of the influence of cultural and ideological practices on the creation of meaning. Ideological practices must be connected to discursive and narrative practices and brought into the realm of the everyday, for they are a part of "a complex series of mechanisms whereby meaning is mobilized in the discursive practices of everyday life" (Thompson, 1984:63).

IDEOLOGICAL PRACTICES AND THE TRADE-UNIONS

The production of a labour newspaper, the organization of a strike, the training of newly elected officers, the negotiation encounters, the rallies, the conventions, the meetings and even the informal *tête-à-tête* around a well deserved drink, all become occasions of creation, enactment and reproduction of ideological practices. These practices interact and are mobilized in every phase of union life: the proceedings of a meeting are printed in the union's newspaper, which is studied in a training session and in turn, the knowledge produced there helps to solve an interpersonal problem that occurs in a local committee. Through these ideological practices, the leadership of the trade-unions will attempt to develop and maintain a hegemonic control of the organization.

However, I believe that these ideological practices are better conceptualized as a set of resources used by relatively autonomous parts (sub-systems) of the trade-union than as a set of truths imposed upon the organization by the leadership. The 'control room' metaphor (Collins, 1989) fails to explain the observed ideological coherence.² As a resource, ideological practices will be

enacted by various actors in the everyday life of an organization. In his work *Asylum*, which describes the characteristics of total institutions, Erving Goffman crafted the notion of institutionalized motives, or frames of reference, which "may nevertheless function to restrain other types of interpretation" (1961:91). These frames of reference are ideological practices that will be used to regulate the organizational life.

Nevertheless, even if such social actors can enjoy a relative autonomy, the battle for the hegemonic control of labour organizations persists. In this struggle, a newspaper like the *AFL-CIO News* remains a crucial apparatus that needs to be controlled by the union leadership. In the everyday life of the American trade-unions, the *AFL-CIO News* provides the assorted stories, narratives and meta-narratives needed to interpret the social world. It presents the main social actors, describes their accomplishments and their predicaments, and constructs a totalizing representation of the world. The texts printed in this newspaper reflect the trade-union life and cannot be dissociated from the practices of production and decoding (reading). Because of this connection between the texts and the organizational practices, an analysis of the *AFL-CIO News* will allow for the discovery of the forms of ideological and symbolical manipulation that are taking place inside the organization.

Each and every story that is printed becomes a battleground in the quest for hegemony. When Barthes (1988b) discusses the nature of the text, he opposes the concept of a *writerly* text with the notion of a *readerly* one. The reader of a writerly text will be allowed to construct a variety of meanings from this source; the text is characterized by its openness. "We know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning...but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash" (Barthes, 1988b:146). The cultivation of this hegemonic control is performed through multifarious efforts to close texts, to transform the writerly into the readerly and to limit the possibilities of meaning creation.³

The objective of this paper is to examine which stories are told, to find out who tells us these tales and to uncover which world view is promoted. The analysis will highlight the narrative and discursive elements that support three key ideological practices: practices of transformation, practices of commodification and practices of definition. The *AFL-CIO News* performs a transformation of the social actors' nature and characteristics: members who occupy an active social position as workers are transformed into the passive beneficiaries of the union's victories. The battles of the past—the worker's struggles and victories—are reduced to simple discursive commodities that are mobilized to support labour's image of continuity and radicalness. Finally, the newspaper defines, for the purposes of the internal debate, certain key political or organizational concepts: it establishes what are democratic practices, progressive attitudes and important issues. Through these practices, ideological structures that contribute to the perpetuation of the existing social and organizational systems are constructed, maintained and reproduced.

SOURCES OF DATA AND METHODS FOR THE ANALYSIS

The *AFL-CIO News* was founded in 1955 at the time of the merger between the AFL's trade-based unions and the CIO's industry based ones,⁴ most probably out of a necessity to create some sense of organizational cohesiveness in the renewed partnership. The publication evolved, slowly replacing articles constructed around formal statements of the labour's policy with stories more in tune with a modern 'journalistic' style. Nowadays, a rapid glance at any issue of the *AFL-CIO News* evokes images of the *USA Today*: colour on the first page, bold graphics, colour photographs and relatively short stories. Each story printed in the *AFL-CIO News* reproduces the name of the writer and this practice suggests the existence of mainstream media concepts such as the objectivity of the press.

The study was conducted through an analysis of three issues of the AFL-CIO official newspaper: the *AFL-CIO News*. These issues were randomly selected over a one year period (1990). Each story and photograph was

constructed as a basic unit of analysis, using the concept of *lexia* defined by Barthes (1974:13): "the best possible space in which we can observe meaning." This method produced 131 different items for the analysis (89 articles, 35 photographs and 7 graphics/tables).

THE SOCIAL ACTORS

"*Qui est le donateur du récit?*" (Barthes, 1971:25). When he asks who gives us the tale, Barthes implicitly states the importance of the identification of the story's narrator. According to the framework developed in *L'analyse structurale du récit*, the tale can either be narrated by a single individual (the expression of a personal subjectivity), or attributed to a total consciousness (a diffuse and Godlike authority). It is also possible for the characters of a story to give an account of their own actions. In the case of the *AFL-CIO News*, the second option seems to be the rule: a diffuse authority, the conscience of the union movement, describes a complex world in which various protagonists engage in social actions.

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THE PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

In the modern newspaper, the text is still an essential element, the photograph an optional one. Yet photographs, when they appear, add new dimensions of meaning to a text. As Roland Barthes has observed, "pictures...are more imperative than writing, they impose meaning at one stroke, without analyzing or diluting it." (Hall, 1972:53)

	Leaders	Members	Politicians	Others	Total
Men	46	35	3	4	88
Women	1	11	1	3	16
Children	0	0	0	2	2
Total	47	46	4	9	106

Figure1: The representation of persons according to gender and stated occupation

With only one exception⁵ the 35 photographs included in the selected issues of the *AFL-CIO News* represent persons taking part in various

activities. Figure 1 identifies the represented persons according to their gender and their stated occupation.

The obvious situation revealed by these numbers is that men outnumber women on a 5:1 ratio. The unions are described as places where men take control of the action and occupy the roles of protector of women and owners of the public life. This description reinforces the dominant values of struggle, brute force and violence. In union life, women participate in protests or in membership meetings; the union allows some place for women but only if they assume a pre-defined role as a member. There is no place here for specificity, as the following story demonstrates: "For 114 years, conventions of the Marine Engineers have been a men only function.... The tradition ended this year.... Two women delegates were present.... They received a round of applause from the 46 male delegates" (AFL-CIO, 1990b:4). Even if the presence of two women is acknowledged the story will quickly reduce them to their normal status—simple delegates. In addition to this split along gender lines, a second division is established between the members and the leaders of the unions: the latter roughly equal the number of the former, but there is only one woman among the 47 leaders depicted. Furthermore, the distinction between leadership and membership is deepened, using the criteria of variety and seriousness of the activity. Figure 2 describes the activities in which the leaders engage.

Men who are leaders...	
Are taking part in a meeting or in a discussion	17
Stand or speak on a podium to a crowd	12
Talk to or listen to a politician	9
Lead a rally or a protest	3
Inspect a factory	2
Attend training sessions	2
Portrait of...	1

Figure 2: Activities of trade-union leaders.

The leaders are active. They take part in meetings and discussions with other union leaders or with important individuals such as technical experts, politicians, public agencies managers or company chairpersons. The representation of this activity simultaneously produces an opposition between the nature of the work performed by the officers and ordinary workers, and creates a theatrical opposition/relation between union and society's leaders. The dramatic action will be characterized by the exchanges between these important social actors, thus excluding the members from the definition and the resolution of their own problems. A second oppositional/relational pair is defined between the leaders and the union's members when the officers are represented standing on a podium, addressing a crowd or leading a rally. Each of these performances requires an audience and the members fulfill that function and contribute to the construction of a dynamic relation between the leaders' activity and the members' passivity.

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On the other hand, the members represented in the photographs of the *AFL-CIO News* act as good union members, holding signs, protesting or picketing. Figure 3 offers a complete tally of the pictured activities. Workers are represented almost exclusively as participants in union activities, emphasizing their identity as members. This implied definition relates directly to the needs of the organization and to those of its leaders. It also excludes from labour's scene the non-unionized workers (unemployed persons, welfare recipients). The political and ideological life of the AFL-CIO and its social projects refer only to the world of the members.

Men who are members...		
Protest, picket or hold signs		26
Talk and chat with other members		3
Work at their usual jobs		2
Take care of a child while protesting		1
Inspect the site of an accident		1
Sit on a couch with wife and child		1
Portrait of...		1

Figure 3: Activities of trade-union members.

OUTSIDE THE ORGANIZATION

The members simply do not exist as significant social actors in the public sphere, outside the organizational realm. This public world belongs to the unions' leaders. Labour's action, an essentially collective process, are individualized and reduced in the *AFL-CIO News*' reports to the union leader's activities. Leaders are named and their functions and responsibilities are always spelled out. "AFL-CIO Vice-President Lenore Miller... Vice-President Owen Bieber of the UAW... Charles B. Dale President of the Newspaper Guild... Alfred Di Tolla, President of the Stages Employees..." (AFL-CIO, 1990c:8). This technique transforms the benefits of the collective action into the results of the hard work of certain individuals, a direct connection to the dominant ideological values of individuality. The unions are successful because they have effective leaders. In addition, the trade-unions are transformed into tools or resources personally owned by the officers. In the following story a reader may believe that the leaders are pledging their own money to support the New York Daily News strikers.

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Vice-President Morton Bahr of the Communication Workers pledged \$50 000, while Vice-President John J. Sweeney of the Service Employees and John Kelly of the Office and Professional Workers each pledged \$30 000..." (AFL-CIO, 1990c:8)

In the social world, labour's leaders interact with various politicians who are always referred to as representatives of one political party. In the description of the politicians, there are no surprises: the Democrats are the good guys "...an amendment was offered by Sen. Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.). Supported by the AFL-CIO, it would have granted supplemental benefits..." (AFL-CIO, 1990b:3) and the Republicans the bad ones "...symbolic of the scraps left over for working people under the Bush capital gains tax plan" (AFL-CIO, 1990b:3). The leaders also meet with employers ('the real producers of wealth') and appeal to judges (who protect society from the actions of the greedy captains of industry).

A STUDY OF THE NARRATIVES

Now that the key actors that inhabit the world of the *AFL-CIO News* have been identified, an analysis of the narrative structures used in the newspaper may reveal how they act and what is the nature of the relations between the protagonists. The organization of the narrative constructs an internal structure into the text and, in so doing, limits the reader's ability to create meaning. Eco (1981) illustrated how such configurations organize the decoding of a specific story. However, the influence of the narratives goes beyond this internal effect: the repetition of specific structures produces an ideological effect by limiting the range of possible decodings of texts. The interpretation pattern thus created will be transferred and used in the interpretation of a wider range of social events. The study of the labour movement's publications reveals the existence of a central narrative and the presence of a series of secondary narratives used as supporting stories.

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THE MAIN NARRATIVE

The main narrative is reproduced in a number of stories and it can be used to integrate the remaining articles inside a coherent ideological framework. An effective way to introduce this narrative is to examine a story constructed around it:

Local 802 also won a first contract for the musicians who perform with the Concert Pops of Long Island. Those members overwhelmingly ratified a first contract with the New York Brass Choir Inc., the parent group of the Concert Pops. The three year accord provides job security for the 39 musicians who were organized in July 1990. Complaints of late payment of wages and of arbitrary dismissals had prompted the organizing drive. The contract addresses those issues. (AFL-CIO, 1990c:7)

The basic narrative structure displayed here consists of a succession of three different moments: the union won a contract, the members approved it

and finally, the contract provided benefits to the union's members. Two preliminary stages usually appear before this dramatic progression: the union knows how to act and, using this knowledge, it initiates the action. If these initial phases are included in the basic framework, the completed sequence of action unfolds in the order illustrated in figure 4.

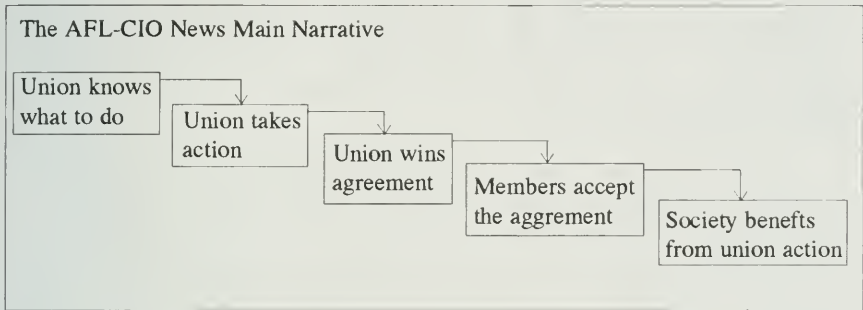


Figure 4: The AFL-CIO News main narrative structure.

The first moment of the sequence is characterized by the construction of the union as a legitimate organization: *the unions know what to do*. This legitimization is performed through a series of stories that promote the personal qualities of the union leaders. A recurring column, appearing in every issue of the *AFL-CIO News*, is entitled "Newsmakers." Inside this feature information regarding the whereabouts of the movement's leaders is published. "Robert T. McIntyre, executive Vice-President of the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO...recently was presented the first annual William E. Cockerill Sr. award by the United Way of Lackawanna County..." (AFL-CIO, 1990c:9). In addition, the unionists will appear in photographs that represent them working, often early in the morning, in the company of important public personages. "Sen. John Glenn (D-Ohio) addresses nuclear concerns at a breakfast meeting with conference delegates" (AFL-CIO, 1990b:4). At a second level a valorization of the technical skills mastered by the union officers is produced when the *AFL-CIO News* promotes the organization's

training program: "The craft of negotiation, Negotiation and writing contract language, Advanced arbitration and Working with the news media..." are several of the showcased skills (AFL-CIO, 1990c:7).

However, this fabrication of the unions' legitimacy depends for the greater part on the appropriation (reinterpretation) of the past and on the continuous demonstration of the justness of the organization's cause. In the first issue of the year the *AFL-CIO News* ran a three-page story entitled "American Labour in the 80's" (AFL-CIO, 1990a:10-12). This article presents a series of cases in which the persistence displayed by the workers lead to important victories.

The Clothing and Textile Workers won a contract at J.P. Stevens after a 17-year struggle. Ten years after the UAW began an organizing drive, the tenacity of its members finally yielded a contract with Ortner Freight Car Co. (AFL-CIO, 1990a:10)

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The survey of the previous battles is used to construct the image of the 'noble worker.' It associates this image with the American trade-unions and creates a reservoir of tales that will be slowly added to labour's mythology. The article moves forward and gives the reader the official history of the preceding decade.

The 1980's were marked by another phenomenon: the emergence of the two-tier contract, which permitted lower wage scales for new entrants... This management demand was less than palatable for workers and their unions. But the double-digit unemployment rate of the Reagan Recession was taking its toll on workers and their families, and unions reluctantly bowed to this economic necessity. (AFL-CIO, 1990a:11)

This reinterpretation of the past will be etched in stone and will become as definitive, within the movement, as is the story of the Great Depression. Union members or officers who opposed this political line of concessions will not be able to refer back to their own interpretation of what is now labelled as the 'Reagan Recession.'⁶ The bottom line is that the labour movement

survived the Reagan years and business can go on as usual. "A union card remains the worker's best friend" (AFL-CIO, 1990a:12).

This commodification of the workers' past struggles through ideological practices does not stop there as selected worker's biographies are used to legitimate the union's actions. A series of articles on the issue of occupational health and safety accomplishes this task by presenting several cases of injured workers. "Harold Gallegos, a soft-spoken man, has endured two years of untold pain and suffering since being contaminated by a chemical soup mixture..." (AFL-CIO, 1990b:7). This is the classical appeal to a higher moral ground: if the unions are fighting to protect the sick and even to prevent death, how can one oppose its actions?

The second stage of the narrative sequence occurs when *the union initiates action*. This narrative moment reifies the union itself and presents it as the real initiator of various actions. As a consequence, workers and union members are excluded from the key moments of collective action, the elaboration of the strategy and the decision to act. If the union can be identified as the source of the action, the future benefits will be attributed to the union, thus justifying its existence. This process is used in the body of the various stories. "The Arkansas AFL-CIO joined in a complaint to the Federal Communication Commission claiming that a major television station slanted its coverage on a state ballot question" (AFL-CIO News, 1990c:5). But most often it operates in the headlines' text. "Unions seek right to act to save workers lives" (AFL-CIO, 1990c:2). The other technique used to produce this effect is to credit the union's leader with the initiation of the action. A typical illustration of this method can be found in the caption of one photograph: "Union Presidents Vincent Sombrotto, left, and Moe Biller rally members of the Letter Carriers and Postal Workers outside the USPS headquarters" (AFL-CIO, 1990c:6). The members disappear from the scene as the union leads the way: "AFL-CIO Vice-President Lenore Miller of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Stores Union, said RWDSU pledged \$75 000, with \$55 000 coming from its Local 1199." (AFL-CIO, 1990c:8) The

fact that real members contributed their own money in solidarity for the New York Daily News strikers becomes irrelevant.

The natural consequence of any action on the part of the union is that *the union wins an agreement*; this constitutes the third stage of the narrative. The union gains new benefits for its members, "Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) at three Arizona supermarket chains won wage increases and lump-sum payments under a new five-year contract" (AFL-CIO, 1990a:2); signs agreements with employers, "...the UAW has won agreements that the companies will join in the effort for a national solution to the U.S. health care problem" (AFL-CIO, 1990c:1) or wins court battles, "ACTWU legal action wins retiree center for 20 000" (AFL-CIO, 1990b: 13). Once again, the contribution made from the workers becomes an element of the background. Sometimes the workers have to strike: "A week long strike by 11 000 members of the Services Employees Local 399..." (AFL-CIO, 1990b:15). However, even if this action was staged by the union's members, the headline of this article reads: "SEIU local wins contract at HMO." The reified union becomes the true social actor.

The fourth stage of the narrative begins when *the members accept the agreement* which the union obtained for them. The role reserved for the members is quite limited, essentially they will have the opportunity to cast a ballot to approve the results of the bargaining between the union's representatives and the employer. "IAM members at McDonnell Douglas Aircraft Co. ratified a three-year agreement that provides a 11.5% wage increase plus lump-sum bonuses over the contract term" (AFL-CIO, 1990a:2). In this article, the percentages of the approval vote are emphasized. This provides a clear indication of the democratic structure of the union and, especially when the result of the ratification vote is overwhelming, gives an indication of the approval rating of the union performance. To give an impression of being a democratic organization seems to be important. Another story explains that a union organized a ratification vote through a mail-in ballot. What can be more democratic than a vote in which every member had the opportunity to express his/her opinion in the privacy of his/her own home? No

membership meetings where anti-democratic practices may take place, no debate and no pressure. The kind of democracy promoted by the trade-unions bears a striking resemblance to the mainstream American practice of voting once every four years without taking part in any kind of public debate.

The last part of the central narrative describes how the workers and society in general benefit from the trade-union's actions. The workers' gains are presented in every article reporting on the settlement of a negotiation. The descriptions of the benefits are usually very detailed so that everyone can have a precise idea of the gains reaped by the union. Moreover, the effects of the union's action reach not only the workers but also members of society at large. In a report of a conference on nuclear safety this is stated in a straightforward manner: "Concerned activity by the various unions have helped reduce risks in recent years, but the greed of private contractors and the lax administration of the DOE has added to those risks" (AFL-CIO, 1990a:4). But sometimes the connections are far more subtle. One article runs under the following headline: "UMAW wins right to work Navajo repeal" (AFL-CIO, 1990c:5). The story explains how the Navajo Tribal Council, under pressure from the United Mine Workers of America, removed a right to work disposition in favour of the Navajo workers from the local legislation. The result of the vote was 34-33. "[S]aid Eugene Badonie, president of UMWA Local 1924. 'From now on, the Navajo people will have good labour laws'" (AFL-CIO, 1990c:5). One man's notion of progress is another man's notion of genocide.

THE POWER OF THE MAIN NARRATIVE

The basic form of this main narrative is so predominant in the articles of the *AFL-CIO News* that it will be used to report the 'not so successful' contract negotiations. "The United Transportation Union reached agreement with the CSX Corp. railroad subsidiary to reduce crew sizes. About 375 workers will be affected by the change.... Another 175 furloughed brakemen will not return to their jobs under the accord. They may have either a \$5000 separation allowance or the relocation money (\$20 000 if jobs are available)" (AFL-CIO, 1990a:4). In this story, the main narrative sequence is used and its

ideological dominance allows for the presentation of this defeat (375 eliminated jobs) as an ordinary bargaining report. The employer bargained in good faith and reached an agreement, the union did its job and the employees will be awarded a separation allowance. A defeat becomes a victory. The narrative structure clearly limits the possibility to look for global explanations outside the typical pattern. If it cannot be explained, then it becomes an Act of God.

THE NARRATIVES FOR ACTION

In the second stage of the main narrative the unions organize and engage in various social actions. The examination of the different conceptions of social action displayed in the *AFL-CIO News* reveals a strong preference for legal action, political action and collective bargaining. Figure 5 shows the articulation of these different modes of action.

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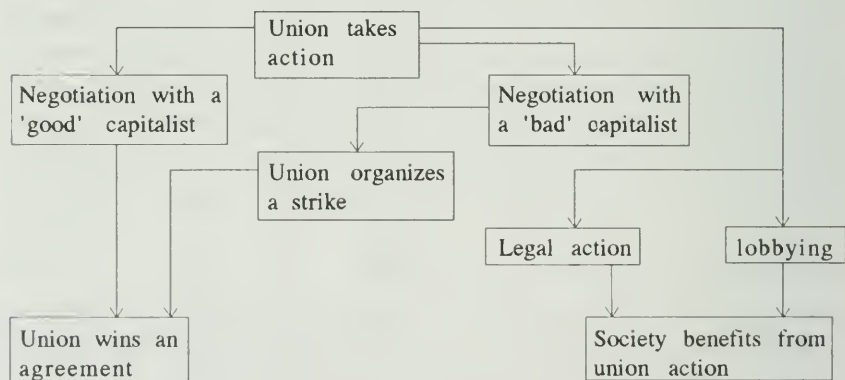


Figure 5: The narratives for union action

Initiating legal action is one of the preferred tactical avenues used by American trade-unions. A labour organization instigates legal action to gain

general benefits for its members or to solve a complex bargaining process. Legal action is important for the labour movement mostly because its conception of the interrelations between the social system and the legal world is similar to the point of view usually promoted in the American society. The possibilities for individual and collective action are embodied in 'rights' which are created by laws. "That includes the right to refuse life-threatening work without suffering recrimination for the employer, and the right for the workers' representative to participate fully..." (AFL-CIO, 1990c:2). In consequence, pressing to get new legislation passed is constructed as an important activity because this action results in further protection for members and society. "The Communication Workers urged the swift passage of legislation to curb workplace violations of privacy by employers and to protect the rights of workers and consumers" (AFL-CIO, 1990c:11). Getting new legislation is the way to reform society and to use such tactics demonstrates complete agreement of the labour movement with the actual 'rules of the game.' "Organized labour is completely committed to getting reform legislation introduced in the next Congress and 'we will do everything we can do to get it passed' Donahue said" (AFL-CIO, 1990c:2). When the law is constructed as the prime ruling force of society and when the U.S. Constitution provides 'Justice for All,' appealing to the Courts to obtain justice becomes the legitimate way to act. "A union and human rights alliance is suing the Bush administration..." (AFL-CIO, 1990b:4) or "The lawsuit was brought by Civil Service Employees Association Local 830, on behalf of 7000 public workers" (AFL-CIO, 1990a:3). Even if the Courts are portrayed as neutral bodies, the union prefers to keep a firm control over their actions. "Biller said that the unions still would like to settle negotiation without proceeding to arbitration, 'where anything can happen'" (AFL-CIO, 1990c:1).

In this context, the activity of lobbying becomes an appealing way to press for new legislative protection. Union leaders perform this mission when they schedule meetings with state or federal politicians. "Georgia Building Trades delegation calls on Rep. Ben Jones (D-Ga.) during the BCTD

legislative conference in Washington" (AFL-CIO, 1990 b:3). The promotion of members' interests is also accomplished through public lobbying, when unions stage press conferences in which the leaders present their policy proposals on various topics. "In a white paper titled 'Legacy of Neglect: America's Decaying Roads and Bridges' Iron Workers' President Jake West warns that the decaying road system also would undercut productivity, jobs and even global competitiveness" (AFL-CIO, 1990c:3). Yet, a more effective way to exert influence is for the union officers to become accepted members of the 'old boys network.' The AFL-CIO's officers excel in this trade. "Co-chairs of the event included AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue, General Motors Corp. Chairman Robert Stempel and Richard J. Schmeelk, Chairman of C.A.I. Advisors" (AFL-CIO, 1990c:7).

Nevertheless, even if legal action and lobbying remain important activities, the negotiation of collective agreements remains the AFL-CIO *raison d'être*: "Through contract negotiation where possible and through legislative action when necessary, labour will..." (AFL-CIO, 1990a:12). The examination of contract bargaining stories reveals the basic ideological assumptions of American labour and a fundamental community of interest existing between the employers and the unions. "In every sector of our society, there is a growing commitment to consider a new national approach..." (AFL-CIO, 1990c:1). This is not only explicitly stated in the articles but also suggested by the kind of treatment reserved for the good capitalist, the employer who chooses to play within the good faith bargaining scenario proposed by the unions. These rational employers are praised for their actions: "Exel, a subsidiary of Cargill Inc., undertook the agreement out of enlightened management philosophy that a company that is not part of the solution is part of the problem" (AFL-CIO, 1990a:3). The ideal narrative for the bargaining stories is built around the idea that a serious and intensive bargaining taking place between a union and an *enlightened* employer will yield an agreement both parties will find beneficial. A small dose of common sense then proves that the economic system works for everyone. "[R]apid conclusion of our negotiations was possible only because both parties entered

the process with a firm commitment to move forward and to avoid the kind of adversarial labour relations we had seen at Eastern" (AFL-CIO, 1990a:2). Ultimately, this construction goes beyond the bargaining process itself and becomes the metaphor upon which society should be organized: a negotiation of interests and advantages in which each party enters in good faith is seen as the only civilized way to work in a capitalist society. If everyone agrees to abide by this general rule, no one should lose and the emergence of conflict becomes rare, if not impossible.

However, a small number of employers, because of bad faith or mere ineptitude, reject the model proposed by the labour movement. If the employer displays an improper behaviour, the *AFL-CIO News* will compare its actions to those of more responsible managers. "Theatrical Stage Employees Local 1 voted strike authorization against CBS Inc., after successfully bargaining new agreements with rival networks NBC and ABC" (AFL-CIO, 1990b:15). The workers had to give the union a strike authorization, but this kind of action is always the consequence of the employers' position in the bargaining process. "The News management made a cold, deliberate decision to work against unions and their employees..." (AFL-CIO, 1990c:1). If, later in the process, the employees have to walk out, it will be in response to the employer's bad faith: either management delayed too long to initiate the bargaining process or demanded unreasonable concessions from the workers. "The 1700 miners walked off the job after 17 months of stalled negotiations. Pittston was seeking to eliminate or sharply cut health benefits..." (AFL-CIO, 1990a:2). At this point, it is important to stress that the AFL-CIO will never describe an ongoing strike as a success, the decision to initiate this pressure tactic is always a result of the employer's action and a major failure of the bargaining process. Only when the strike is over will its memories and images be transformed and become part of the union's mythology. The union continually works for a quick termination of the strike and tries to convince the employer of the losses caused by this ordeal. "But the company's own financial reports...show that an end to the strike would be in the interests of all parties: workers, creditors and management" (AFL-CIO, 1990b:2). The

end of a labour dispute is always presented as the end of a nightmare, and both labour and management wish for a different scenario when the time to bargain a new contract arrives. "Pittston Chairman Paul W. Douglas saluted the miners and their families... He expressed hope that labour and management could develop a long term solution..." (AFL-CIO, 1990a:2).

THE MYTHICAL DISCOURSES

84 The utilization of myth can be related to a series of discursive practices that support the narratives and strengthen the worldview presented in the *AFL-CIO News*. However, the existence and the effects of myth remain subtle and difficult to detect and this is why its investigation bears such a weight in the discovery of ideological practices. According to Barthes (1988a), myth naturalizes the association of determinate meanings with specific signifiers and performs this association in an ambiguous manner: it can be done through a simple juxtaposition of two different sets of signifiers or through displacement (or substitution) of usual meaningful associations. The impact of the myth is instantaneous in nature: "...myth essentially aims at causing an immediate impression—it does not matter if one is later allowed to see through the myth, its action is assumed to be stronger than the rational explanations which may later belie it.... That is all and that is enough" (Barthes, 1988a:130). Because of its naturalness, the ideological effects of the myth will survive its unravelling. "A more attentive reading of the myth will in no way increase its power or its ineffectiveness: a myth is at the same time imperfectible and unquestionable; time or knowledge will not make it better or worse" (Barthes, 1988a:130).

A demonstration of a mythical creation of meaning by a juxtaposition of signifiers can be found in the article entitled "Unions Seek Right to Act to Save Workers' Lives" (AFL-CIO, 1990c:2). The first step used here describes the safety conditions existing in the American factories as similar to those of wartime conditions: "...the war in the American workplace daily claims victims. Workers pay the toll, employers pocket the profits and 20 years of attempts by the OSHA to diminish the sacrifice have failed" (AFL-

CIO, 1990c:2). The juxtaposition is completed, a paragraph later, recalling the Vietnam war: "For 16 years the bloodshed in Vietnam appeared in nightly newscasts and the tally is inscribed on a memorial black granite walls—58 175 names..." (AFL-CIO, 1990c:2). This association yields a predominant meaning: the killing that takes place in the workplace produces real deaths, as serious as the ones occurring in combat. Still, it goes beyond the obvious; comparison between the workers and the soldiers, between the trade-unions and the Nation, between the employers and the enemy, and finally, an association between the workers' struggle and the plight of the American soldiers forced to fight with 'a hand tied behind their back' are created.

In some cases, the discursive strategies become more subtle and involve a succession of associations and substitutions that foster the desired effect. Several days before Thanksgiving, this complex technique is displayed in a feature headlined "Children Are the Victims of Foreign Toymakers" (AFL-CIO, 1990c:3). The title of the article builds on an ambiguity; at the first glance it can be deciphered as 'American kids are the victims of *unsafe* foreign made toys.' During the Christmas season, every parent or adult wishes to protect the safety of his/her children, nephews and nieces. This headline creates an enigma and the reader seeks to know which toys to avoid in order to fulfill his/her mission and bring joy and pleasure to American children. Reading the article resolves this enigma by creating an additional mystery, the story describes the conditions of exploitation of child labour in overseas factories located in Asia. "The young workers slept in dormitories, two or three to a bed, and earned \$10 to \$31 a month. Twice a month, children as young as 10 were forced to work 24-hours shifts" (AFL-CIO, 1990c:3). Five countries are named in the first two paragraphs of the story: Taiwan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Thailand and China, but in the rest of the article, only China is mentioned.

This feature is constructed on three main arguments: first, capitalists who exploit children are 'evil' capitalists and must not be encouraged, second these exploiters are foreign nationals or even communists (the multiple references to China), and finally, to stay on the safe side, all foreign-made toys

should be avoided. The myth is created when the American trade-unions cast themselves in the role of the defender of children and implore the reader to join them in the boycott of foreign made toys. This illusion is completed by a side story entitled "Buy these toys," in which the American corporations are named and a list of the appropriate and safe products is displayed. Now, the consumer knows how to act and can alleviate his/her guilt by enacting a dominant bourgeois myth, the ideal of a good consumer. Not only does this story negate the fact that exploitation and domination thrive in American factories and conceal the connection between overseas sub-contractors and U.S. companies, but it also contributes to the support of one of the *AFL-CIO News*' main narratives: that the trade-unions are the best defense against exploitation in general.

THE TECHNIQUES OF MYTH

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In the last pages of *Mythologies*, Barthes describes a group of rhetorical practices (that he situates 'on the Right') used in everyday discourse in the creation of myths: inoculation, the privation of history, identification, Neither-Norism, the quantification of quality, tautology and the statement of fact are some of these discursive figures. Examples of several of these rhetorical techniques can be found in the *AFL-CIO News*. For the purposes of this article only inoculation, identification, and the quantification of quality shall be discussed.

Inoculation works by admitting into the narratives a small quantity of opposing stories, tying in with notions of freedom of speech, plurality and democracy. This nominal dose of evil awakens the ideological immune system and in so doing supports a general claim that the system as a whole functions well. More often than not, the *AFL-CIO News* uses this method by opposing a small number of 'bad' capitalists to a group of employers who accept the rules of the game and bargain with the trade unions. The construction of Eastern airlines as such an antagonistic employer starts in January (AFL-CIO, 1990a:2), continues in April (AFL-CIO, 1990b:1) and is still going on at the end of November (AFL-CIO, 1990c:2); a surprising

continuity if the randomness of the selection of the material for the analysis is taken into account. Naming the individuals involved contributes to the attribution of the responsibility for the system's mishaps to individual behaviour. The trustee (Martin Shugrue) is presented as a misbehaving administrator who is overoptimistic, who lies and refuses to talk to the unions. "[A] trustee be appointed to replace former Eastern boss Frank Lorenzo.... Instead of bargaining with the IAM, Shugrue conducted a 'smoke and mirror' campaign to rebuild ridership..." (AFL-CIO, 1990c:2). The reader is asked to remember the irrational actions of Frank Lorenzo, those that led to the demise of Eastern Airlines: "...the latest chapter in the downward spiral of an airline that once was a major force in the industry" (AFL-CIO, 1990c:2). This presentation of 'evil' capitalists ultimately reinforces the belief that the system can work well if everyone contributes; the whole society benefited from the existence of Eastern Airlines and now, it no longer exists.

Identification relates to the representation of the other; its conventions enable the reader to deal with the question of difference and similarity between individuals or groups and, in so doing, to construct a sense of identity. Depending on what the preferred effect is, the manipulation of identity that takes place in the *AFL-CIO News* revolves around the opposition between being an American and being a worker. To a union member, being a worker is important when he/she is confronted with other workers having different identities or a different set of social problems, and the common bond of labour will be stressed by a number of articles. Union leaders from different countries are presented in the pages of the paper: a Bulgarian leader meets with the American labour president (AFL-CIO, 1990b:13), a Polish Solidarity member expresses support for U.S. miners (AFL-CIO, 1990b:15), Salvadorian unionists are portrayed as participants in a peace conference (AFL-CIO, 1990b:6) and the plight of Cuban workers will be the angle used to discuss the social and economic situation in that country (AFL-CIO, 1990c:4). However, stressing the similarities between workers of different nations is always balanced by an appeal to American values or interests. An interesting angle on this can be found in an article entitled "Union, Right

Group Sue Bush over Trade Preference.” (AFL-CIO, 1990b:4). In this, the AFL-CIO appears to be preoccupied with the human rights violations that happen in foreign countries and where employers “...take advantage of cheap, exploited labour” (AFL-CIO, 1990b:4). In fact, this article develops side by side narratives: the first one tells the members that American jobs can be protected by reverting to protectionist measures and the second story pretends that something is done to promote the cause of human rights in foreign countries. In this case, the labour movement is not asking the administration to put pressure on the Nations with bad records but rather to cut trade, thus removing unfair competition for AFL-CIO’s members. Suddenly, the foreigners are not workers any more and the good foreigners are the ones who imitate American values. “Geraldo Aroyo, president of the AFSCME Local 3345, delivered a remarkable soliloquy that ranged from his six-mile swim to freedom 25 years ago to his Vietnam war service, to his fight for justice for the groundskeepers at Florida International University” (AFL-CIO, 1990c:4). For the American trade-unions, international solidarity still translates in the export of the U.S. model of unions: free unions, capitalism and democracy are included in the same package.

The *quantification of quality* is an operation that reduces an aesthetic or a political quality to mere numbers. “By reducing any quality to quantity, myth economizes intelligence” (Barthes, 1988a:153). The *AFL-CIO News* returns to this practice when dealing with the concepts of representativeness and democracy. A trade-union is representative and efficient when it represents an important number of persons and many stories will leave no doubt of the importance of AFL-CIO’s unions in the mind of the reader: “The APWU and NALC representing 568 000 employees formed the joint bargaining committee...” (AFL-CIO, 1990c:1) or “...is a 22 minutes documentary video tape describing RWDSU Local 1199’s recent contract victory for 50 000 health care workers...” (AFL-CIO, 1990c:7). The sheer force of numbers can also be expressed in actions of solidarity: “A coordinated campaign by 8000 steelworkers at 23 plants in the U.S. and Canada...” (AFL-CIO, 1990b:4). This method also serves to establish the democratic character of the unions: the number of actual voters or percentages are disclosed in

numerous stories and are used to qualify the approval vote on a contract agreement. "Steelworkers at 13 LTV steel plants overwhelmingly ratified a new agreement...USWA members approved the settlement by a 10 026-1131 margin" (AFL-CIO, 1990b:2). On these grounds, it becomes impossible to use a different criteria to judge the quality of the agreement; one just has to look at the numbers. The fact that the union was unable to organize a strike, that the pattern of negotiation was set in a similar factory or that the bargaining committee sold out, are transformed into useless arguments. In a way, this line taps in the argument developed by the Rock the Vote media blitz:⁷ if you do not vote, you cannot criticize the results of the election or the actions of the elected officials.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO THE AFL-CIO

This description of the social actors, narrative structures and myths created in the *AFL-CIO News* can be summarized along two axes of opposition presented in figure 6.

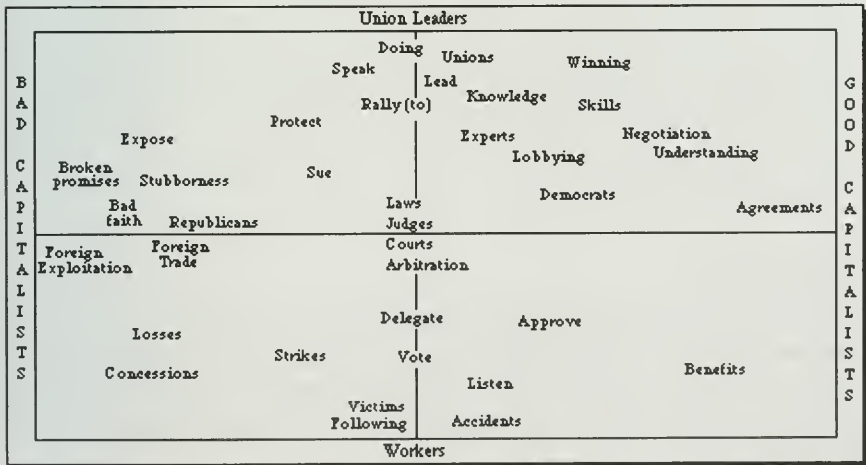


Figure 6: The world according to the AFL-CIO News.

The first opposition links the union leaders and the workers in a relationship of membership in the trade-union. The workers are powerless victims of the inequities of the system. Their only hope to get out of this situation is to join the union where they will find a place to fit into a more global system. By joining the union, they will delegate their power to the leaders and receive the benefits provided by them. The leaders have the knowledge and the skills to negotiate with employers and to protect the members from the greediness of 'evil' employers. The second oppositional axis describes the social system. The world is organized on a continuum of good will. At one extreme, the good capitalists and the friendly politicians understand the need for the presence of trade-unions in the economic system. At the other end the 'evil' employers are the cause of exploitation, strikes and concessions.

90 In a clockwise order, the first of the four quadrants represents the relation between the good capitalists and the union leaders: through negotiation and lobbying, union leaders and employers build a mutual understanding and agree on new contracts. In the second quadrant the union members benefit from the agreements and from the existence of the good employers: they show gratitude for this situation when they democratically accept the new contracts. In the third quadrant the members are the victims of the bad faith of the 'evil' employers: this is the world of losses, concessions, strikes, and of events ultimately caused by the employer. The final quadrant is the place where the union leaders fight the greedy capitalists and expose their actions in order to protect the workers. In the center of this world the court system stands as the final arbitrator.

CONCLUSION

This study focused on a textual analysis of the *AFL-CIO News*. Whatever view one takes on the validity of this approach, it would be interesting to complete this initial research with an examination of the conditions of production of the newspaper and with an analysis of the readings produced by actual audiences.

However, as the title of this paper suggests, the fundamental question is to know if ideological practices exist 'on the Left'. A practical answer would be to state that ideological practices do exist in the American trade-unions and that, as this final story shows, trade-unions are a part of mainstreaming ideological practices.

The California AFL-CIO plans to mount a legal challenge to a voter-approved initiative that would allow private industries to employ prison inmates 'Not only will public safety be endangered and jobs of law-abiding workers threatened but inmates will be put back on the streets with shortened sentences,' Henning stated.... Two current inmate labour programs...allow inmates to take reservations for a major hotel chain and for a major airline. These inmates know where the customers live, the customer credit card number and when they are leaving and returning home... (AFL-CIO, 1990c:5)

This article creates a direct connection between a social event and the worst fears of the public. Less than two years after the Willie Horton advertisement campaign, this article taps into the popular perception of prison inmates. This manoeuvre is to be expected on the Right, not inside an organization which describes itself as progressive. The structure of this story closes the text and forbids every possible interpretation of the social event that would not agree with the organizational purposes of the trade-union movement.

Barthes answers the question of left-wing ideological work by creating a distinction between an idealized left (the revolution) and the actual left. "I have been asked whether there are myths 'on the Left.' Of course, inasmuch, precisely as the Left is not the revolution. Left-wing myth supervenes precisely at the moment when revolution changes itself into 'the Left,' that is, when it accepts to wear a mask..." (Barthes, 1988:146). On this point, I agree with this statement. However, what would be the way to engage in a social practice aimed at changing the conditions of existence, without reverting to

ideological work? Is this possible or is the domination of others a fundamental characteristic of human activity? These questions open the door to a redefinition of the concept of ideology on a more relativistic perspective. Ideology should be better described not as ideas, but as practices.

NOTES

1. The *AFL-CIO News* is published by the Washington office of the AFL-CIO and describes itself as the labor movement's official newspaper. In the case of individual subscribers, the paper is delivered by mail and the cost of a one year subscription is \$10.

2. In his discussion of ideology, John B. Thompson describes the concept as "a coherent system of statements imposed on a population from above" (Thompson, 1984:63). Jim Collins states: "This notion of culture czars in master control rooms orchestrating all forms of mass culture bears a striking resemblance to the vision of the State constructed by Fritz Lang films...and Dr Mabuse, the Gambler (1922), in which virtually everything is manipulated by the evil genius Mabuse, again in a master control room with an army of eyes" (Collins, 1989:10).

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3. In this context, the text can take various forms. At a first level, each story printed in the *AFL-CIO News* is a text which will be interpreted through the other texts (past and present) contained in the newspaper. Furthermore, it is possible to use the metaphor crafted by Paul Ricoeur (1977) and to describe as texts a series of historical circumstances that are taking place in union life: situations like strikes, economic changes, political events, trade wars, etc. "My claim is that action itself, action as meaningful, may become an object of science without losing its character of meaningfulness, through a kind of objectification similar to the fixation which occurs in writing" (Ricoeur, 1977:322).

4. On the different philosophies of the AFL and the CIO, see Stolberg (1938). For a Canadian perspective on this merger, see Lipton (1966).

5. The only exception was a photograph of a collapsed bridge.

6. Unions who chose to use different strategies will simply disappear from the history. Around 1986, the Canadian UAW disagreed with the U.S. union about the concession strategy in the auto industry. The Canadian union seceded from the American movement and staged what can be labelled as a victorious strike.

7. An advertising campaign organized by MTV during the 1992 US presidential election. The goal of the campaign was to convince young voters to register and vote.

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Problematizing The Issue of Cultural Appropriation

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As a feminist cultural worker, I consider the subject of cultural appropriation a fundamental one for me to address. Yet I do so hesitantly.

First, appropriation continues to be a 'hot' topic in the white-dominated media, and since the discussion often focuses on the imaginative 'freedom' of white artists, there is the danger of perpetuating white concerns and obscuring hegemonic relations (Hill, 1992a).

Second, when cultural workers from non-dominant groups argue for autonomy and self-determination, my political instinct is to immediately support such a demand. To speak simply in agreement with and on behalf of marginalized voices can, however, be an attitude of arrogance, and it does not help me, as a white woman, to question aspects of privilege in my own subjectivity and to challenge colonialist and hegemonic practices in the dominant culture. Furthermore, un-interrogated support neither enhances my project of developing a political cultural practice focusing on transformation nor informs a politics of coalition and collaboration.

Third, questions about appropriation interpenetrate other complex issues that flood the field of cultural studies such as identity, difference, voice, representation, universality, and political correctness. None of these issues, either singly or in relationship—do they ever work singly?—are manifested in theory/practice in a simple way. Trying to problematize appropriation feels like a formidable task; it is a highly contested, and possibly overworked terrain. In terms of my own entry into the issue, I think about what

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complications I will forget, omit, obscure, and have time and/or space for in this paper.

Finally, while I am conscious of trying to avoid closure and conclusions in this essay, I will offer critiques, suggest approaches, and inevitably finish the marks of writing on some page to come. I want and need to insert some lucidity and cogency to my wrestling with the issue of cultural appropriation as I also attempt to make space for continuous/contiguous questioning and an ongoing state of mulling and puzzlement. I want to both hold 'appropriation' still and shake it up and shake it down, avoid it and confront it, and to settle in to an opinion and to hold on to a state of ongoing revisions and shifting perspectives. It is within this arena of contradictory tensions that I begin this paper.

With the above cautions, contradictions, and hesitations shadowing my words, I will discuss two approaches to the issue of appropriation, and then I will consider a third theoretical position that is a more complex reading of the issue in its problematizing of power relations. This latter approach draws on feminist and post-structuralist theories¹ and is implicated in my ongoing revisionings/reversionings of my position as a feminist cultural worker.

THE TERM 'APPROPRIATION' AND QUESTIONS OF RESISTANCE

Before turning to viewpoints on appropriation, I will briefly address a few of the varied understandings of the term as it is used in cultural studies. My intent is to indicate the range and complexity of terminology rather than to catalogue the many contexts and meanings of appropriation. In discussing 'resistance,' I emphasize the importance of an analysis of power relations and demonstrate the imbrication of resistance, subversion, and opposition with issues of appropriation and cultural politics.

My focus is on cultural appropriation as it has been addressed in the past three to four years in the context of Canadian cultural production. There has been an emphasis on issues of race, representation, Aboriginal self-determination, and the concerns of non-dominant cultures whose works and artifacts are appropriated by the dominant culture. In this regard, a number of

Toronto-based cultural studies publications including *FUSE*, *Border/Lines*, and *Parallélogramme*, have foregrounded the concern with cultural appropriation.² Todd (1990), for example, has described appropriation through a strategy of opposition: the 'inversion' of cultural appropriation is cultural autonomy. Her emphasis is on origins and self-determination or unmediated Native cultural production. According to Todd, the appropriation of Native culture is an abrogation of difference and a fetishization of the 'Other' such that Native sources become commodities to be desired and valorized with consequences of profit and acclaim for those appropriating. Similarly, Browning (1992) understands appropriation as taking the experiences of 'others,' interpreting them, and materially benefiting from them. In addition to the ongoing attention to appropriation in the various cultural studies journals mentioned above, Toronto-area newspapers have also focused on appropriation,³ often with a link to the political correctness debate.

Popular cultural studies demonstrates different usages of the term 'appropriation.' Some theorists consider appropriation in the context of resistant or oppositional reading practices of audiences. According to Sholle (1990: 90), this 'trend' in popular cultural studies considers "the complex relation of audience pleasures to dominant social structures." Drawing upon Brecht's work, Kipnis (1993) posits a notion of "refunctioning" whereby elements from the dominant culture are appropriated and transformed. This position shares similarities with ideas of pastiche, pirating, and pilfering (Berland, 1993; Hartnett, 1990; Willis, 1990). Lipsitz (1990:99) applies Bakhtin's concept of the dialogic and the importance of social and historical contexts to popular music and suggests that the influence of the past on current rock music is "a dialogic process, one embedded in collective history and nurtured by the ingenuity of artists interested in fashioning icons of opposition." Simon and Giroux (1989:228) associate empowerment and opposition with the appropriation of popular cultural forms:

Popular forms have to be renegotiated and represented in order to appropriate them in the service of self and social empowerment. This suggests a critical pedagogy disrupting the unity of popular

culture in order to appropriate those elements which enable the voice of dissent while simultaneously challenging the lived experiences and social relations of domination and exploitation.

These approaches are linked by an emphasis on transformation, opposition, and resistance. This notion of 'resistance,' however, needs to be problematized and some of its suppositions require questioning.⁴ Sholle (1990) suggests that the relationship of power, knowledge and resistance is often confused in popular cultural studies. The dominant culture allows for certain forms of resistance but there are also forms that "remain uncoopted by the hegemonic culture" or that "*authentically* [emphasis added] break with the dominant culture" (Sholle, 1990:96). Sholle's intent is to emphasize the need for popular cultural studies to differentiate and analyze forms of resistance. While a consideration of what kinds of resistance are possible within discourses is crucial, setting up a hierarchy of resistance requires coherent and determinate definitions of resistance such that boundaries are fixed and possibilities for opposition are limited and contained. Sholle's point that "the question is not whether or not there is resistance but rather what it is and when it is *significant* [italics added]" also depends on definition (1990: 97). But what is significant? For whom? Who gets to decide? What does/might resistance look like in specific socio-historic conditions? Are there, for instance, 'openings' that point to the possibility of resistance, of producing ourselves as subjects differently? Might resistance be understood as operating on a continuum?

Sholle's critique of Willis's and Corrigan's "trivial" examples of resistance is lodged in what Sholle understands as an unspecified and unproblematized notion of political transformation. Willis's and Corrigan's possibilities for change are read as emotional reactions to regulation rather than as rewritings of discourses. Sholle critiques this work in order to bring a channelled politicization to resistance and to emphasize that shifts in discursive formations are not initiated by emotional reactions. Stressing an analysis of power relations for resistance is important, but dichotomizing affective response from focused resistance does not recognize the complex

interplay of emotion, sensory experience, and corporeality in subversion and opposition (Giroux and Simon, 1989).

I agree with Sholle that it is not enough to merely affirm resistance and understand it as *inherently* political; it must be historicized and politicized. Nevertheless, I would prefer to hold on to a more open concept of what constitutes “political significance” than that found in Sholle’s insistence on locating resistance within a commitment to radical democracy.

In what follows I will critique two fixed and competing views on appropriation that have been at the centre of the cultural appropriation debate, and I will offer more complex and open perspectives that present the possibility of challenging the limits of these first two approaches. I will not address questions about appropriation by focusing on a specific cultural form. Rather, I will reflect on discussions that speak to the issue as it inheres in various forms of cultural production, and I will draw on the responses of writers who, from diverse subject positions, consider appropriation. I remain aware that issues are not identical for all non-dominant groups and in all forms of cultural production. In fact, I will argue for specificity and historicization—how cultural producers and readers are invested in a text at particular socio-historic moments.

CULTURAL APPROPRIATION: CONCERNS ABOUT AUTHENTICITY AND SELF-DETERMINATION

The first view of appropriation is expressed in the following manner: If any dominant group’s form of cultural production uses the ‘voices’ or experiences or materials of an oppressed group, it constitutes appropriation.

One of the difficulties of this view is the underlying assumption that only the oppressed have authenticity. Such a position suggests that “the oppressed express a truth that will win out...[and] language is seen as simply representing reality rather than constructing it” (Razack, 1993:61). As Lather (1991:164) points out, “there is no ‘correct’ line knowable through struggle;” the concerns and the conditions of struggle in any community are constantly shifting and “any useful theories of social change must deal with this fluidity.”

The meanings of texts are lodged in specific historical contexts and cannot be transferred into generalized conclusions about oppressed peoples: "While we need texts that affirm marginalized subject positions, however, it is important to be constantly wary of the dangers of fixing subject positions and meanings beyond the moment when they are politically productive" (Weedon, 1987:172). It is important to stay alert to "how our multiple identities are constructed and played out at any one time in any one context" (Razack, 1993:69).

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Another aspect of this view is the implied understanding that marginalized groups will automatically speak to issues of oppression. There are two problems that this raises. The first difficulty is the danger of reducing a work "to theme, to its *about-ness*" since it may be "*about racism* but is not reducible to it" (Srivastava, 1991:30-31). The work of a cultural producer from a non-dominant group is then considered according to how that work speaks to or for the issues of that group. As Weedon (1987:168) points out, however, "the race and ethnic background of a writer does not guarantee the race politics of a text." Trinh (1991:75) also indicates that "there can hardly be such a thing as an essential inside that can be homogeneously represented by all insiders." Concomitant with this view is the demand and expectation to produce work that takes up issues of oppression. In referring to film and video by people of colour,⁵ Verjee (1992:42) notes:

[E]vents are so sporadic and visibility so scarce, artists of colour are received mainly as political representatives, that is, they are expected to speak for and be accountable to their communities. Structural and institutional exclusion and marginalization have meant that people of colour and their work must always bear the weight and burden of the concerns of race and racism. The public role for artists of colour and their work carries this burden of representation regardless of audience. This burden of representation, a condition of the historical marginalization, often means that questions of representation, gender and sexuality are brought forward in reductive ways which foreclose the possibility for critical dialogue.

Adopting the view that appropriation occurs whenever a dominant group uses the 'voice' of an oppressed group demands a confinement to instituting a prescriptive approach with rules and guidelines. A policing that continues a colonialist perspective is then required. Prescriptions, being unenforceable, do nothing to challenge systemic racism and do not guarantee opportunities for the works of non-dominant cultural producers to be heard. Furthermore, the policing approach provides a convenient hook for white, middle-class writers to vent their outrage about censorship, shout for artists' rights, and ignore racism issues (Philip, 1990a).

In addition, cultural producers with various privileges of access and acclaim can conveniently ignore any critical analysis when they take on the role of ally or adopt a simplistic form of support for those marginalized peoples struggling against appropriation. This is reflected in 'offering' a space for the 'Other' to speak, or unproblematically getting caught up in "waves of benevolence" (Spivak, 1990:63). Trinh (1991:72) illuminates this point:

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This is akin to saying that a non-white view is desirable because it would help to fill in a hole that whites are now *willing* to leave more or less empty so as to lessen the critical pressure and to give the illusion of a certain incompleteness that needs the native's input to be more complete, but is ultimately dependent on white authority to attain any form of 'real' completion. Such a 'charity' mission is still held up with much righteousness by many, and despite the many changing appearances it has taken through the years, the image of the white colonial Saviour seems more pernicious than ever since it operates now via consent.

Furthermore, when white artists dismiss charges of appropriation by responding with an 'I'm-on-your-side' response, they conveniently ignore their place in white cultural domination. In articulating this point, Hill (1992a:14) refers to an artist's letter in FUSE:

Andy Fabo's question, "Are we really the enemy?" ...seems to use the position of the alternative artist to deny his legacy of White power as well. Am I saying, "You are the enemy?" I don't think the issue is that simple to delineate. My point is that you are inheritors of a complex and diverse power structure that can't be undone simply because you are innocently good-intentioned.

Hill's comments have generated angry responses from a number of white artists who, either in Hill's essay or in that of an earlier one by Native artist Joanne Cardinal-Shubert, had been challenged about their appropriation of Native cultures. In the case of the artist group, Fastwürms, their response focuses on the artists' affinity with Native politics, particularly their respect for Native spirituality and support for Native sovereignty. Concomitant with this position is their accusation to Hill of lying; Fastwürms (1992:4) calls for distinguishing "truth from lies, fact from fiction, a good argument from a bad one." Hill's letter in response is important because it critiques Fastwürms on their claim to truth identification and their insistence on being able to name themselves as subjects outside of their locations and histories, that is as a "non-western culture" (Hill, 1992b:5).

Both Hill's and Fastwürms' letters address a range of issues, not all of which can be addressed here. However, I find Hill's letter, with its emphasis on power relations and questions of access to resources, an important critical analysis. Nevertheless, I have to question Hill's insistence on the evidence and authority of 'experience' to argue for his originary and unquestionable knowledge as a Native person. This argument forecloses an analysis of the construction of subjectivity and an investigation of discursive formations. As Scott (1992:25) argues:

When experience is taken as the origin of knowledge, the vision of the individual subject...becomes the bedrock of evidence upon which explanation is built. Questions about the constructed nature of experience, about how subjects are constituted as different in the first place, about how one's vision is structured—about

language (or discourse) and history—are left aside. The evidence of experience then becomes evidence for the fact of difference, rather than a way of exploring how difference is established, how it operates, how and in what ways it constitutes subjects who see and act in the world.

In summary, fixed notions of communities and a fixed understanding of oppressed/oppressor require ignoring “those with hyphenated identities and hybrid realities” (Trinh, 1991:73):

Community, then is the product of work, or struggle; it is inherently unstable, contextual; it has to be constantly reevaluated in relation to critical political priorities; and it is the power of interpretation, interpretation based on an attention to history, to the concrete, to what Foucault has called subjugated knowledges. (Martin and Mohanty, 1986:210)

CULTURAL APPROPRIATION:

CONCERNS ABOUT FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

A second contemporary view constructs the issue of appropriation as a plot from the camp of the politically correct. Some white, male, middle-class writers, with their privileged access to different media forms and with the support of the media status quo, have been particularly vociferous in their objection to the idea of appropriation of ‘voice.’ In opposition to the first view, this stance is lodged in concerns about censorship and freedom of imagination. In a series of articles and letters in the *Globe and Mail* about the Canada Council’s position regarding appropriation, the newspaper has foregrounded concerns about restriction, constraint, manipulation, and what one headline for ten letters sharing similar outrage about censorship calls “Frightening Attack on the Imagination” (*Globe and Mail*, March 28, 1992:D7). Without entering the debate about the Canada Council’s policies,⁶

I will nevertheless address the questions of censorship and artistic freedom raised in this view of cultural appropriation.

In writing about the appropriation of Native stories, Lenore Keeshig-Tobias (1991:174) states that "white Canadians cry censorship and decry self-censorship." Trinh (1991:231) suggests:

The focus in censorship debates has repeatedly been the legal defense and protection of white male artists' privilege of exhibiting works whose explicit/implicit racial or sexist stance is stridently ignored. The colonialist creed "Divide and Conquer" will persist as long as issues of censorship, racism, and sexism continue to be treated as unrelated.

Philip (1990a:210) links these issues into a comprehensive critique of how "one discourse, censorship, becomes privileged; the other, racism, is silenced." When questions of power and privilege are ignored, racist practices are perpetuated. The debate has to move away from the individual concerns of cultural producers who demand that they must use any experience they choose for realizing their creative expression. Instead, what is needed is an examination of the institutionalized forces and interstices of power that privilege some cultural producers at the expense of others (Giroux, 1992; Philip, 1990a).

In considering the view that stridently argues for the dominant culture's right to freedom of expression, one must question who is really being 'censored.' As mentioned above, attacks levied against considerations of appropriation are often articulated as censorship coming from the 'politically correct.' Yet as Schulman (1991:19) points out:

One empowered individual's discriminatory speech can rob an entire group of people of their 'right' to speak. By valuing absolute speech rights above civil rights, PC-trouncers are helping reseal the silence of those who, historically, have had the least access to speech, just as that access was being forged.... Silencing

disenfranchised voices is the most effective way to prevent real social change.

Hill (1992a) and Keeshig-Tobias (1990) argue that a complaint by non-Natives of censorship fails to recognize the censorship of Native culture that occurs as a result of Native peoples' difficulty in accessing media attention as well as the ongoing representation of their cultures by non-Natives. Churchill (1992:41), quoting former American Indian Movement leader Russell Means, observes that what is really at stake in the appropriation of Native spirituality is the very existence of Native people. 'Ripping off' Native culture is an act of "cultural genocide."

The penultimate argument for freedom of expression comes from Findley (*Globe and Mail*, March 28, 1992:D7): "I imagine—therefore I am." The unquestioned arrogance of this position from a writer with all the privileges of funding, innumerable published works, the authorization to determine cultural issues, critical acclaim, and a valorized reputation obscures an understanding of exactly whose imagination is 'free.' What is 'obvious' to Philip (1990a:215) is clearly not apparent to those who argue for a non-critical praise of imagination: "To state the obvious, in a racist, sexist and classist society, the imagination, if left unexamined, can and does serve the ruling ideas of the time." Maracle (1990) argues that justifying the appropriation of Native stories by arguing for freedom of imagination is a racist strategy.

Concomitant to the argument for unfettered imagination, free rein to any subject matter, and imagining and using the 'voice' of an 'Other' regardless of the particular historical conditions of oppression and colonization, is the universalizing of knowledge. Churchill (1992) points out that non-Natives who usurp aspects of Native spirituality for their own work often argue for their right to spiritual freedom when they are confronted with the charge of appropriation. Thus, Native spirituality becomes universalized such that non-Natives have the right to adopt its practices and beliefs. In the context of histories whereby Eurocentric culture has obliterated indigenous cultures, for

a white person to argue "what's yours also belongs to me" perpetuates racist and colonialist practices.

In discussing the siege on Native culture, both Todd (1990) and Kulchyski (1992) analyze the intersections of politics and culture. They point to some of the historic practices that have led to current cultural conflicts and particular resistances by Native peoples. In tracing the history of the State definition of 'Indian' in Canada, Kulchyski discusses how the legislation designed to enfranchise and define Canadian peoples also served to provide a space of subversion whereby Native people could use the legislated definition of difference to underline their distinct status. Kulchyski (1992:180) notes: "Marginality became in part a position from which aboriginal culture could resist totalizing power." He also details the attack in the late 19th and early 20th centuries on particular Native cultural practices such as the potlatch and the sundance, and describes ongoing Native opposition to policies designed to silence Native culture.

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Todd (1990) similarly argues that Native peoples' resistance to cultural domination must be understood in a socio-historic context. She links the concern with cultural appropriation to the concept of Aboriginal Title and suggests that for Native peoples the issue is not merely a new media focus but an awareness lodged in historic colonialism. Aboriginal Title becomes the opening whereby negotiation "with the colonizers" is made possible, and "it asserts a reality that existed without European mediation, before Native peoples were positioned as Other" (Todd, 1990:32).

Finally, this second view of appropriation focuses on cultural producers who disregard issues of privilege. Power relations cannot be taken for granted. The privileges of access to funding, of getting work produced, and of receiving critical attention determine how the issue of appropriation will be framed. In other words, those artists in positions of power vis-à-vis access will often raise issues that address the undermining of their privileges. Schulman (1991:20) puts this point forward as a question: "How do certain privileges that we might have access to determine which issues we pursue, and how does this pursuit make the needs of those with no such access invisible?"

Spivak (1988:117) urges a concern for "the theory practice of pedagogic practice-theory that would allow us constructively to question privileged explanations even as explanations are generated." These privileges are rooted in an "absence of understanding how the silencing of the many enables the few to become the articulators and disseminators of knowledge and culture" (Philip, 1990a:217).

Philip also suggests that 'social responsibility' must accompany privilege such that cultural producers will take action: whether it involves a decision not to appropriate 'voice' or it "impels them to do something else, but they ought to be impelled to do *something*" (1990a:218). Most importantly, cultural producers must recognize that in a classist, racist, homophobic, and sexist society writing "about rather than out of another culture" (Philip, 1990a:218) guarantees more access and attention for the privileged few.

(RE:)SHIFTING AN APPROACH TO CULTURAL APPROPRIATION: PROBLEMS AND QUESTIONS

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The two approaches to appropriation that I have pried open here are oppositional views that tend to foreclose critical interrogation. Drawing on arguments from a number of sources, it is possible to suggest a critical approach that avoids fixed responses and claims, and instead adds complexity to the issue of appropriation by raising questions of difference (i.e. insider/outsider boundaries), historicization, and ways of thinking about transforming power relations. Foucault (1982:791-792) points to an understanding of power relations that underlines critical analysis, historicity, and the possibility of social change:

Power relations are rooted deep in the social nexus, not reconstituted 'above' society as a supplementary structure whose radical effacement one could perhaps dream of.... A society without power relations can only be an abstraction. Which, be it said in passing, makes all the more politically necessary the analysis of power relations in a given society, their strength or fragility, the

conditions which are necessary to transform some or to abolish others. For to say that there cannot be a society without power relations is not to say either that those which are established are necessary, or, in any case, that power constitutes a fatality at the heart of societies, such that it cannot be undermined. Instead, I would say that the analysis, elaboration, and bringing into question of power relations and the 'agonism' between power relations and the intransitivity of freedom is a permanent political task inherent in all social existence.

Appropriation occurs within a social context that reaps rewards for some and disenfranchises others. Benefits accrue to those in the dominant culture who view knowledge as universal, who ignore the painful complexities of hegemonic relations. Giroux (1992:234) has noted that it is important to interrogate "how dominant configurations of power privilege some cultures over others, how power works to secure forms of domination that marginalize and silence subordinated groups."

Delpit's (1988) notion of the rules which encode the "culture of power" is helpful here. For those 'outside' this field, learning the rules makes for the possibility of acquiring power. Arguing for strategies of access is a recommendation to learn rules; change rules; break rules; and create new, multiple, non-rule possibilities for change. It is also a recognition of the importance of analyzing forms of regulation and resistance in discursive formations. Neither Delpit nor those theorists positing a need for a consideration of access are advocating a world where all cultural groups should learn the codes and rules of the dominant culture. Rather, their point is to remain aware of, and alert to, the shifts and changes in power relations in the field of cultural politics and to ask about who gets to speak, under what conditions, and with what consequences (Black and Morris, 1992; Fung, 1992-93; Hill, 1992a; Philip, 1990a).⁸ Kulchyski (1992:177-178) illuminates this issue in his discussion of the subversive practices of Native peoples:

Resistance involves constructing enclaves of culture within the established order, of finding space within the interstices of power, of controlling the pace and nature of links with the dominant social organization and culture, of adapting Western technology to pre-capitalist social relations, of taking the tools offered by the State and capital and using them to strengthen rather than destroy primitive culture.

An examination of where concerns about 'voice' lie, and how power and privilege are positioned to serve the 'right' of the dominant culture are issues that must be considered. It is imperative to ask why the 'ability' to use the 'voice' of non-dominant cultures is usually an ability of those from a dominant culture and not the reverse. It is also important to note that the ability to do so is fuelled by racist, sexist, and capitalistic practices and is accompanied by privilege:

It is an ability which serves that privilege. It is, in fact, that very privilege that is the enabling factor in the transformation of what is essentially an exercise of power into a right. That right in turn becomes enshrined and privileged in the ideology servicing the society in general. The 'right' to use the voice of the Other has, however, been bought at great price—the silencing of the Other; it is, in fact, neatly posited on that very silencing. It is also a right that exists without accompanying obligation, and a right without an accompanying obligation can only lead to abuse. (Philip, 1990a:212)

What I find useful in Philip's discussion of racism and censorship is her clarity about how a racist society serves to support individualized notions of cultural production and how racism will inevitably be reflected in cultural work (Philip, 1990a; 1990b). Appropriation is not about individual rights. Philip wrestles with questions about whose discourse is served, and asks what, where, why, and how "techniques and tactics of domination" (Foucault, 1980:102) are at work.

Drawing upon the work of Said, Lather (1991:33) also links oppression with questions of representation:

It is "the formidable difficulties of empire" that are at the root of the crisis of representation and the consequent paradoxes of producing and legitimating knowledge in a post-foundational context. To challenge canons, to expose systems of power which authorize some representations while blocking others—this has been part of the self-proclaimed task of the uprising of the marginalized, the silenced, the ex-centrics.

Issues of representation require a complex analysis concomitant with questions of access and an imbrication of anti-racist issues with those of gender, sexuality, and ethnicity. All of these concerns require specificity: a consideration of their interplay at particular socio-historic moments can suggest transformative possibilities for the future.

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Further layering and complications are introduced with a problematizing of notions of 'absolute reality' and an 'authentic outsider' such that a space is provided whereby rigid definitions of insider/outsider can be questioned, locations of difference can be understood as fluid rather than fixed, and definitions or categories of cultural identity can be interrogated. As Trinh (1991:76) asserts: "'I' is not unitary, culture has never been monolithic, and more or less is always more or less in relation to a judging subject."

A difficulty with the position that insists on all-encompassing notions of self-determination and community is its link to essentialism, identity politics based on rigid parameters, and a search for and belief in autonomy. In the call for a fixed, determined, and defined position, another 'truth' is offered up to replace other fixed approaches. There is an assumption that this position can stand autonomous from the complex imbrication of discursive formations. But any theoretical approach both produces, and is produced by, various discourses that intersect at particular historical moments.

A fixed notion of community is at stake when a political space is demarcated such that any dominant group's form of cultural production that

uses the material of a non-dominant group is understood as cultural appropriation. A number of questions then emerge. If this response to appropriation requires a consistent and unified community 'voice,' is there any space for questioning and dissenting positions? Who has the authority to name the parameters of appropriation and decide if a work 'fits' or not? Are voices of disagreement silenced when, with so much at stake, a community is in struggle to challenge painful inequities in cultural areas such as education, funding, dissemination, and critical attention? Are there multiple ways to make meaning in collectivity rather than merely representing unity? Can contradiction, dissent, and tension enhance and create, rather than threaten political possibilities? How can political alliances be shaped that avoid a collapse into unified identity? How can coalition, collaboration, and community politics encourage multiple points of entry? While engaged in the concrete struggles of everyday life, can an approach of ongoing critical attention be emphasized such that "a single discourse does not become the locus of certainty and certification" (Giroux and Simon, 1989:24)?

In order for communities and groups to engage in counter-hegemonic and resistant cultural practices and make claims on the economic and cultural monopolies of the dominant culture, the idea of 'appropriation' requires acts of definition. There is always the inherent danger, however, that parameters will be established whereby what fits or does not fit becomes determined and policed, and what is legitimate and can be promoted becomes fixed and enshrined. A helpful strategy is to adopt "a willingness to recognize that a representation may 'mean' differently in place, in moment, and in particular minds" (Lubiano, 1991:159).⁹ An analysis of cultural appropriation needs ongoing complication, restructuring, and refocusing.

In her consideration of appropriation, Verjee (1992:46) argues for movement "forward through critical dialogue rather than reverting to reductive analyses." I understand critical dialogue as that which emphasizes the interrogation of social and historic conditions and examines relationships of power and knowledge (Foucault, 1980; Weedon, 1987). Weedon's descrip-

tion of a feminist post-structuralist framework is pertinent for problematizing the issue of cultural appropriation. Such an approach

...addresses subjectivity, discourse and power in an attempt to show that we need not take established meanings, values and power relations for granted. It is possible to demonstrate where they come from, whose interests they support, how they maintain sovereignty and where they are susceptible to specific pressures for change. (Weedon, 1987:74-75)

With the above considerations in mind, how might bases of power be shifted? Keeshig-Tobias (1990:177), for example, suggests that "there comes a time when...all white supporters of Native causes will have to step back...and let the real Native voices be heard." Remembering Trinh's cautions raised around the 'authentic' subject, I question how a 'real' Native 'voice' can be unproblematically identified. Concomitantly, however, I am suspicious of plunging into a wave of circular questions while avoiding actions that might engage the possibility of transforming power relations. However, to conclude with only an open call to action here would be an inappropriate gesture.

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This propels me to introduce two reservations about the conceptual shifts I am attempting to map out in this paper, and I would suggest that they are related. First, while I am problematizing the notion of cultural appropriation and reworking its theoretical frames of reference, I am also holding on to the strategic use of the term for cultural politics. Appropriation has concrete material effects for particular groups of people engaged in cultural practices. At the beginning of this paper, I mentioned that I was entering its terrain from sites of contradictory tensions, and one of the tensions is situated in my investments in both sustaining and problematizing 'cultural appropriation.' Second, although I have pointed to the importance of attending to the specific historical relations, conditions, and possibilities of cultural production, I have not focused on one particular case in detail. Attention to cultural appropriation in terms of one cultural text and the specific configurations of

its production and reception would provide a concrete way to think through the dilemma of both problematizing and sustaining 'cultural appropriation.'

In conclusion, the issue requires ongoing questions and a layered critique rather than quick-draw solutions. Instead of avoiding or erasing the term 'cultural appropriation,' I choose to underline its contested meanings and provisional uses: to think of the term as "a site of permanent openness and resignifiability" (Butler, 1992:16). Appropriation "has to be kept alive as a *problem* [italics added]" (Spivak, 1990:63): as a theoretical and political problem.

Wrestling with the queries of this paper is not an abstract exercise. In terms of my own practices, I wonder how to establish a political subject, 'feminist cultural worker,' that does not foreclose notions of what constitutes 'feminist' and 'cultural worker.' I want to build a transformative, oppositional cultural politics¹⁰ based on collaboration, collectivity, and community that rewrites potentialities for the future. In doing so, I want to stay open to ongoing shifts in, and challenges to, notions of resistance, identity, difference, and coalition. If fluidity and complexity in meaning-making are erased, possibilities and potentialities for social change and transformation will be diminished.

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NOTES

1. I am not suggesting that I have drawn from a singular and coherent body of work in these fields. Both feminism and post-structuralism are highly varied and contested terrains and their interplay is complex. But it is their interplay that interests me for thinking through questions of subjectivity, discourse, the production of knowledge, power relations, resistance, and social change.
2. *FUSE*, in particular, has published numerous articles that either focus on, or pay some attention to, cultural appropriation. A recent issue (Summer, 1993) takes cultural appropriation as its theme.
3. See, for example, Conlogue (1992), Godfrey (1992), and Ross (1991).
4. This discussion is, of necessity, brief and it does not take into account how the category of 'resistance' is used in analyses other than that of cultural studies, such as in feminist and

post-structuralist theories. For the latter, see Alonso (1992: 404-425), Foucault (1982), Game (1991), MacLeod (1992), Mohanty (1992), and Pathak and Rajan (1992). An attention to resistance, however, is significant for theorizing political cultural practices as well as the relationship of audiences to cultural texts.

5. In his essay, Fung (1992-93) discusses the problems associated with the phrase 'people of colour' and refers to a number of sources for an examination of terminology. I use the phrase here in the context of Verjee's use of it.

6. For a comprehensive analysis of arts councils, see Bailey (1992) who also includes letters by Faith Nolan, Alan Gotlieb, Marlene Nourbese Philip, and Anne Collins.

7. A recent issue of the *Journal of Communication* (1992) focuses on political correctness and the implications for communication studies. Lawrence Grossberg, Everette Dennis, and a number of other writers point out that political correctness does not have a fixed, coherent or consistent interpretation and that diverse understandings and questions inform the terrain of this term.

8. Paul Willis (1990:3) suggests that non-dominant groups may also engage in resistance to strategies of access:

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It may be that certain kinds of symbolic creativity in the expressive and communicative activity of 'disadvantaged' groups exercise their uses and economies in precisely eluding and evading formal recognition, publicity and the possible control by others of their own visceral meanings.

9. As Fung (1992-93:50) points out, "there is no absolute representational remedy."

10. As I write this, I feel a need to interrogate my understandings of 'transformation,' 'cultural politics,' and my engagement in a struggle for social transformation. That project and its theorization and embodiment is continual and will have to be the subject of other writings.

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Re-thinking Cultural Policy: Critical Approaches in the Era of Privatization

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Long established practices of cultural policy are rapidly changing throughout the world. Indeed, it might not be overstating the issue to say that we are approaching the end of an era in which nation-states played the central role in managing the production, distribution, and consumption of cultural products. Where once cultural policies were developed to serve a broadly defined 'public interest,' today we are witnessing the introduction of policies that are primarily geared to serve *private* accumulation. Throughout the entire global cultural sector, the private market, not the state, is now being promoted as the preferred mode for the allocation of cultural resources. Thus, as Garnham (1992:362-363) notes, cultural products today are viewed less as a public good than as a privately appropriable commodity.

What forces are underlying this dramatic shift? While researchers may debate the extent and the speed by which changes are taking place, it is generally agreed that cultural policy is under pressure from four broad fronts: 1) *technological*—such as the development of alternative distribution systems in broadcasting; 2) *economic*—the creation of a 'global market' in

response to rising production costs and the need to expand markets; 3) *political*—assaults on the legitimacy of the social democratic state and the rise of a neo-liberal agenda; and 4) *socio-cultural*—demands from various constituencies for cultural institutions that serve not just a 'mass public,' but supply a wider range of views and tastes which respond to a 'cultural pluralism' that postmodern theorists have long stressed.

These forces and pressures have been particularly evident in Canada. While cultural policy was until recently implemented to serve a national or 'nation-building' agenda (Clarkson, 1991), contemporary state policies, on the contrary, appear to be contributing to the progressive destruction of national publicly-funded cultural institutions. Canada's trade agreement with the United States and Mexico seems to take yet more powers away from national state agencies and place them under the auspices of international regulatory bodies that are controlled by transnational businesses. The post-Meech era has dramatically exposed the illusion of any univocal myth of 'nationhood' as provinces, regions, and social movements all vie for constitutional representation. Finally, the recent emergence of populist and regional politics suggests a fundamental realignment of traditional political alliances and class forces. In this climate, unifying themes traditionally employed in cultural policy—such as 'nationalism,' 'the public,' and even 'sovereignty'—seem to be losing their force.

122 What are the implications of these developments for those of us working within a critical tradition of policy studies? Does our current theoretical framework allow us to adequately assess these changes and confront these problems? Or is there a need to re-think the terrain upon which our traditional lines of analysis have been drawn? If so, how do we begin to 're-theorize' critical policy studies in light of the profound realignments that are taking place?

It is clear that any answers to these questions will at best be contingent and provisional given the rapidly shifting balance of forces and political struggles currently being waged. With that caveat in mind, however, it is our view that traditional frameworks do not seem able to adequately assess the

complexity of the current forces at play, nor do they offer any effective alternative model that might aid in the construction of a more democratic and pluralistic cultural order. Responses to current problems have continued to be posed in terms of what we view as a simple dichotomy of the 'free market' versus 'state control,' a division that has long dominated much research in the area. It is our belief, on the contrary, that both the oligopolistic capitalist market and the interventionist welfare state threaten the development and expansion of a democratic cultural order. As critical researchers, therefore, we need to avoid the prevailing tendency to retreat to a 'Left Keynesian' or 'Statist' position whereby we end up defending the very institutions and practices that not so long ago we soundly criticized as devilish instruments of 'social control.' While we recognize that state intervention, often at the behest of social movements, has many positive and even 'emancipatory' benefits, it is also the case that these interventions are limited and can even be potentially detrimental for democratic cultural expression. Welfare state intervention, in Habermas's (1987) sense, can lead to the "colonization of the lifeworld"—the bureaucratization and normalization of public culture that undercuts community-based self-expression and solidarity. In other ways, state agencies can actively censor public expression. As Keane (1991) has demonstrated in the case of public broadcasting, the democratic state can take on Leviathan colours by influencing the range of media output through appointments, funding, the granting or with-holding of state advertising contracts, and the establishment of 'policy guidelines.'

In our current research, we want to explore these issues by outlining the pressures that are guiding cultural policy-making today and by suggesting alternatives that might lead toward a more democratic cultural order. While we remain absolutely convinced that state intervention in the broadly-defined 'public interest' remains an important vehicle by which benefits can be had by a wide population, we also recognize that the state should not be the *only* instrument in this goal. In pursuing options for the democratization of cultural production, critical research must also look beyond the market/state dichotomy and toward the creation of institutions within civil society, insulated

from both the market and the state, that will help ensure democratic accountability in an era of increasing concentrations of transnational corporate power.

THE SHIFTING TIDE OF CULTURAL PRODUCTION IN CANADA

Within the federal arena, the era of mandating cultural agencies with a nation-building agenda appears to be drawing to a close. While the removal of the 'national unity' clause from the CBC's mandate is perhaps the most dramatic indication of this, it is simply illustrative of a general erosion in support for a state-driven cultural policy. In its absence, market forces have come to dominate the allocation of cultural resources.

Since the early 1980s, the Canadian economy has been increasingly subject to the pressures of transnational capital accumulation. These competitive pressures have radically transformed the economic landscape of the country as capital has shifted to take advantage of international wage differentials and new trading opportunities. While the federal government has claimed that the cultural sector has been exempt from trade agreements, Canadian media markets have nevertheless been pressured into taking on commercial and transnational flavours in the wake of these deals (Mosco, 1990). Driven by the promise of greater economies of scale, the state, which once pursued policies that encouraged small and diverse nationally-oriented units of production, has now developed policies that favour the concentration of ownership and transnational marketing opportunities. Other symptoms of this regulatory shift include the market-directed expansion of new TV delivery services (such as video cassettes and cable) on an international basis, the progressive deregulation of national telecommunications monopolies, the 'rationalization' of cultural agencies to conform with commercial imperatives, and the growing tendency, as reflected in new international copyright laws, to treat information and cultural resources as a privately appropriable commodity (Schiller, 1994).

The effect of these changes on policy initiatives has been dramatic. In the publishing sector, for instance, the withdrawal of the postal subsidy and

the imposition of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) has reinforced distribution inequities between national and transnational producers, thus eroding the already marginal profitability of Canadian book and magazine publishers. While the film industry has experienced some success with both international co-productions and Hollywood branch-plant productions, national production remains underdeveloped in the face of transnational strangleholds on distribution and exhibition. As their markets fragment and revenues shrink, radio broadcasters are turning to programming formats that minimize production costs and maximize advertising revenue at local levels. Television broadcasters, threatened by direct-broadcasting satellites and the proliferation of cable channels and video cassettes, are moving to develop regional markets and patterns of ownership concentration that extract as much as possible from their economies of scale. And in the newspaper industry, plummeting readership and lost advertising revenues are forcing concentration of ownership between daily and weekly newspaper producers.

Accompanying these political and economic changes, the 'politics of difference' and 'place' have swept through the social fabric of the nation and fractured the political spectrum. As the Charlottetown Accord defeat signalled, 'new' social movements based on regional, ethnic, racial, gender, and environmental concerns have challenged the very possibility of constructing a univocal 'national culture.' These 'new' political forces have greatly influenced the field of cultural policy. Provinces and regions are seeking stronger regional representation in formulating policy. The Canadian Radio Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), the federal regulatory broadcasting agency, has been challenged by a number of minority groups who have disagreed with recent licensing decisions. Television networks are also under pressure to better balance gender and ethnic representation within programming. Finally, public funding agencies are being asked to improve representation on their juries and in their granting patterns.

The combination of such forces—technological, economic, political, and socio-cultural—may be read, on one level, as the emergence of a 'new

pluralism' in cultural politics. The breaking up of state monopolies and the fracturing of the 'mass' audience into segmented niches has been seen, by commentators from both the Left and the Right, as evidence of an increase in consumer power and a proliferation of cultural difference and choice.² Such optimism, however, appears to be premature, if not misguided. With declining state-sponsored support of the cultural industries, oligopolistic transnational commercial interests are increasingly governing the operation of cultural production. Despite the promises of a '500 channel universe,' audience demands and interests that are not commercially viable will continue to find it difficult to have their voices heard.

CHALLENGES FOR THE FIELD

The new directions being pursued in the structure of cultural markets bring into focus some of the difficulties that critical policy analysis faces in forwarding progressive interventions. The changes noted above render many traditional terms of reference within the field incomplete and inadequate.

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The long cherished principle of 'cultural nationalism'—the state-driven promotion of a shared and indigenous form of cultural production—appears caught between the demands of a fractured public and the transnationalization of capital. As a policy-guiding creed, it appears to have been put to rest.

For many critics, the response to this untimely death has been muted at best. There are many reasons for this apparent lack of mourning. In Québec, the repressive tendencies of a pan-Canadian national culture have long given the idea little currency (Raboy, 1992). In English Canada, mainstream critics have traditionally viewed the idea of 'cultural nationalism' with suspicion, reading within it the protection and promotion of a narrow elite culture at the expense of consumer sovereignty and choice (Globberman, 1983; Woodcock, 1985). For neo-marxists, on the other hand, the concept of nationalism has sparked little interest outside of its relationship to questions of ownership of the cultural industries (Clement, 1975; Smythe, 1981).

Similarly, the terms 'public' and 'public interest' which have been at the heart of policy debates are proving problematic. A new generation of

'postmodernists' have argued that the 'public interest' is little more than a stand-in for the interests of white, male, urban, middle-class Canadians. In creating an imagined community of the 'public,' postmodernists suggest, traditional cultural policy has effectively neutralized identities and collectivities based on gender, class, and ethnicity (Lee, 1992:406).

Finally, the concept of 'cultural sovereignty' also appears to be losing its efficacy. At the policy level, this principle had been traditionally expressed in state commitments to providing the necessary infrastructure to support indigenous cultural production. Policies governing telecommunications monopolies, media content regulations, and the simultaneous substitution of Canadian broadcast signals over cable have been enacted and defended according to the principle of 'cultural sovereignty.' However, the decline of the nation-building mandate coupled with newly emerging communication technologies and transnational pressures are making such interventions difficult to maintain.

While the principles of 'nationalism,' the 'public interest,' and 'cultural sovereignty' have in all cases been rightly criticized, it is also important to recognize the uneven and contradictory nature of such terms. Despite their problems, policies enacted under these banners have also served the purpose of providing a rallying point around which disparate social groups have been able to coalesce their interests and demands. Consequently, the collapse of such 'meta-narratives' signals important changes in the dynamics of cultural policy. If the idea of 'cultural nationalism' no longer carries currency, if we can no longer speak confidently of the 'public interest,' and if the principle of 'cultural sovereignty' has been eclipsed by new forces and interests, then what analytic frames of reference are we as critical researchers left with?

Some critics have faced this dilemma by retrenching and defending old principles and state forms of intervention. Others have been content to abandon the field of culture to the logic of transnational capital accumulation. In our view neither approach will do. Instead, we propose that research aimed at progressive interventions must more thoroughly engage with what Bennett (1992:25) notes are "the institutional conditions which regulate different

fields of culture.” This involves a recognition that policy and governmental processes informing cultural practices give rise to specific political relations that regulate access to symbolic forms. In other words, how do specific cultural policies and structures—within both the market and the state—work to systematically exclude/include particular social interests at the expense of others.

On the one hand, these exclusionary/inclusionary practices can be defined as *discursive*—forms of exclusion or inclusion that arise from the normative agenda embedded within particular cultural policies. For instance, how do policy distinctions between private and public, commercial and non-profit cultural institutions regulate access to cultural practices? How do such distinctions define what is legitimate and what is not?

On the other hand, *structural* forms of exclusion and inclusion can be identified. These refer to the broad social pressures and limits that influence the production, distribution, and consumption of cultural products. In Canada, such structural factors to be considered include technology, economies of scale, market size, and ownership patterns. In the case of technology, for instance, little research has been done that examines how the new relations of technology in the cultural sector might actually influence the structure of symbolic forms and to whom they are made available (Garnham, 1990:11).

Discursive and structural practices, as fields that regulate access to cultural resources, are interdependent. Historically, discursive forms have impacted upon the structure of the market, and vice versa. These practices, moreover, are both enabling and constraining. Principles of ‘nation-building,’ for instance, enabled some social groups to organize to advocate forms of intervention in the name of the ‘public,’ yet in the process other social interests were excluded.

An analysis of this kind paves the way for a renewed interrogation of how state practices structure the field of cultural production. As such, this research will allow us to propose progressive interventions aimed at expanding the cultural field to include more voices and interests. At one level, this involves, in Bennett’s (1992:32) terms, ‘talking to’ and ‘working with’ what

used to be pejoratively called the 'Ideological State Apparatus.' Rather than simply writing off the state as a repressive instrument of control, we need to think about more strategic interventions, addressing specific cultural institutions in order to openly engage with the policy-making process.

At another level, however, we need to be aware of the limitations of state administration, its propensities to alienate certain constituencies and 'police' cultural activities. In an era when nation-states are increasingly ceding power to unelected transnational bodies, the political benefit of relying solely on state-sponsored cultural support is also suspect. While we cannot ignore the nation-state, we must nevertheless seek out new social spaces in which cultural practices can be developed and insulated from the tyranny of the market.

The need to find such 'spaces' is critical given the rapid commodification of contemporary culture. Information and cultural products that were once readily accessible through public libraries and other institutions, are increasingly privatized and inaccessible (Schiller, 1989). In the current climate, how can we ensure that developments within the cultural industries do not exacerbate differential access to symbolic forms? To answer this question, as Melody (1990:17) notes, requires that we develop a renewed definition of the 'public interest.' One potentially fruitful way to approach this, without falling back to some repressive normative and totalizing vision of the 'public,' is to think about the kinds of cultural goods various constituencies or 'publics' need in order for their members to participate as full and active citizens within the larger community. The goal of cultural policy studies then is to think about these basic citizenship needs and to propose progressive interventions that can ensure that these needs are met. Without such interventions, as Mosco (1993:22) suggests, a great many people are in danger of becoming 'culturally-illiterate.'

NOTES

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2. For discussions of the 'cultural politics of consumption,' see Mort (1989) and McRobbie (1990).

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Free Trade and Social Policy Reform: The Hidden Dimension?

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Current debates in Canada about the merits or shortcomings of free trade have been framed in a number of different ways. Both the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (CUSFTA) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) have been addressed and assessed in terms of job creation or loss, the possibility of increased environmental degradation, and the potential threats to political and cultural sovereignty.

Despite all the seemingly disparate claims and arguments that are made, however, the free trade debate has at its base a fight between essentially two competing visions of the Canadian economy. On the one hand, there are those who oppose free trade and argue for a strong national industrial policy that commits the state to policies of full employment, national instruments of accumulation (i.e. Crown Corporations), demand-side management, and universal welfare rights. On the other hand, proponents of free trade see the proper role of state policy as promoting market innovation, enhancing structural competitiveness through supply-side intervention, and subordinating welfare policy to the demands of the 'free' market (see Jessop, 1993: 9).

Given the contours of this debate, one of the more intriguing questions about the issue of free trade is how the current agreements will affect the

development and implementation of social welfare policy under a regime committed to the dominance of the free market. Indeed, the uncertain future of Canada's social programs—family allowances, old age security, public pensions, Medicare, education, and social assistance—was a central concern during the CUSFTA and NAFTA discussions. In my current research, I argue that free trade has three detrimental impacts on Canada's social welfare policy. First, free trade encourages a shift from 'universal' to 'selective' or 'residual' social programs, thus undermining any real social commitment to the redistribution of wealth and income. Second, free trade encourages 'policy harmonization,' thus threatening to reduce Canada's social programs to American and Mexican levels. Finally, trade agreements bind the nation-state, both directly and indirectly, from pursuing social policies that may be interpreted as restricting access to markets or as discouraging profit-making. Recent changes to the definition of poverty, cutbacks to Medicare, and proposals aimed at replacing Canada's social safety net with wage supplement programs illustrate the degree to which the ideological underpinnings of free trade have already dramatically altered social policy in Canada.

THE IDEOLOGY OF FREE TRADE: ITS ORIGINS AND GROWTH

The present rush toward continental 'free trade' represents the culmination of over two decades of debate on developmental strategies for the Canadian economy. Briefly, the origin of this debate can be traced to the economic crisis confronting all Western capitalist economies in the mid 1970s. Rising inflation coupled with increasing levels of unemployment produced a phenomenon of 'stagflation' that threatened to stall the growth engine of the West. In Canada, as in other countries, this challenge was most commonly addressed by two different prescriptions for the future. One, drawing upon the tradition of Keynesianism, argued that the solution to Canada's economic woes lay with increased state intervention. Proponents of this view argued that the state needed to play a more active role in promoting scientific research and development in order to boost a declining manufacturing sector. This argument was advanced by a number of academics and think-tanks, such as

the Science Council of Canada, and taken up by elements of the Left, the labour movement, and English Canadian nationalists who believed that a national industrial strategy would help reduce American corporate power (Brodie, 1989:176-177).

A very different vision of economic development, however, was put forth by an increasingly powerful coalition of neo-liberal think-tanks and influential elements of the business community (see Richardson, 1992:321-322). These actors argued that the post-war policies of Keynesian economics and welfarism had produced a mammoth and cumbersome state bureaucracy that was choking off private investment and growth. To alleviate this problem, the size and activities of the state needed to be scaled down and the control of the economy returned to the allegedly more efficient private sector. These neo-liberal economic views were translated into electoral victories in the United States and in Britain (Brodie, 1989:177).

Free trade has been from the start a key component of neo-liberal economic philosophy. In fact, the idea itself stems from the work of the classical economist, David Ricardo, who in the early Nineteenth Century developed the 'Law of Comparative Advantage.' Briefly, Ricardo believed that with free trade between nations, all countries would prosper as each began to specialize in an area of production in which it held a competitive advantage over the others. Rather than trying to produce everything for itself, the nation which is best suited to produce a certain product, because of some natural or other advantage, should specialize in the production of that product and export the surplus. For example, Ricardo suggested that because of its climate and soil, Portugal would excel at the production of grapes and wine. On the other hand, because of its industrial infrastructure, Britain could excel at textile manufacturing (Watkins, 1992:93-94; McGaughey, 1992:36).¹

According to classical liberal economists, the only way that the real 'benefits' of free trade could be realized is if the protectionist and interventionist tendencies of the state could be curtailed. That is, free trade abroad needed to be balanced by a policy of *laissez-faire* economics at home. Lurking inside of arguments for free trade, as Watkins (1992:94) convincingly argues,

is the ideology of the New Right, an ideology that advocates deregulation, privatization, and cutbacks to social spending.

The emergence and dominance of this economic vision has forced a dramatic restructuring of the Canadian state and social policy over the past 20 years. Throughout the 1970s, for example, Canada pursued an aggressive nation-building approach with respect to economic and social policy. The Trudeau government introduced such programs as FIRA (Foreign Investment Review Agency), the National Energy Plan (1973), and the Canadian Development Corporation. These programs and agencies were designed to channel national capital into Canadian-owned corporations and reduce foreign control over the nation's economy (Clarkson, 1991:107). During this period, the state also pursued an ambitious policy aimed at strengthening social welfare programs; the development of Medicare as well as progressive reforms to old age security, unemployment insurance, and the Canada Pension Plan underlined the state's commitment to universality.

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However, during this period of nation-building, Canadian capital had been consolidating and continentalizing at a rapid pace. Canadian banks, real estate corporations, and media industries were particularly successful in expanding their reach into the United States and abroad.² Canada's corporate powers thus had little need or patience for the 'protectionist' and 'interventionist' Canadian state. Instead, they wanted fewer rules and regulations so that they could further extend their reach into the global market (Clarkson, 1991:115-116; Richardson, 1992:316; Deblock and Rioux, 1993:27-28).

Such structural changes in Canada's political economy, coupled with an aggressive lobby-campaign launched by the Business Council on National Issues (BCNI), led to the signing of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (CUSFTA) in 1987. Almost immediately after the agreement's ratification, the number of plant shut-downs, layoffs, and corporate mergers rose at an alarming rate. Public opinion remained firmly against the deal, yet by 1990 the Conservative government was entering yet another round of free trade negotiations, this time a trilateral deal with Mexico and the United States.

It is clear that free trade is about much more than trade only—it is a wide-sweeping prescription for the creation of a society modeled strictly on the ‘laws’ of laissez-faire economics. Indeed, the discourse of ‘free trade,’ much like the discourse of ‘free markets,’ is inextricably attached to a long and complex intellectual tradition of individualism, and specifically to the rights of individual investors and entrepreneurs to move their capital around as they see fit (Marchak, 1989). Free trade, moreover, is clearly presented in terms of national competitive advantage, and thus draws upon vulgar chauvinisms and crude forms of patriotism.

There are other deeper supporting cultural conditions to the social vision offered by proponents of free trade. Free trade is a high risk economic program and is thus easily presented in masculine terms of aggression (‘capturing markets’) and conflict (‘beating the competition’). It is also a mode of assessing odds and determining outcomes, like gambling and sport spectacles—activities that underline its masculine bias. Free trade, like the vision of ‘community’ offered by classical economists, is the brutal world where relations of competition and domination prevail, a world in which nations and people are in perpetual conflict and struggle with one another (see Hartsock, 1983:38-40).

Given that free trade, as it is proposed by neo-liberal economists, represents such a sweeping social vision, it is clear that its influence will extend throughout all elements of society. In particular, the ideology of free trade threatens to drastically alter the role the Canadian state plays in the economic well-being of its citizens. By submitting ourselves to the ‘law’ of comparative advantage, we may be unwillingly subverting the very social programs and services that Canadians have fought hard to achieve. Indeed, one of the first ‘victims’ of free trade may be the very notion of universality itself.

FREE TRADE AND 'UNIVERSALITY': TOWARD A POLICY OF RESIDUALISM?

Universality has clearly been one of the most cherished principles in Canada's modest system of social security. It is a principle that sees social welfare as a citizenship right by which all members of the nation, regardless of income or market power, are entitled to certain goods and services such as health care and education. This vision, however, is clearly jeopardized by the ideology and practice of free trade.

Free trade is part of a neo-liberal package that favours principles of 'selectivity' and 'residualism' in social welfare policy. Such principles affirm the centrality of the family and private institutions in aiding those who have an inadequate income. 'Selective' public relief should only be the last resort after all other private avenues of support have been exhausted. In this manner, as Muszynski (1992:8-9) notes, a residual approach to social policy reinforces the belief that it is the market that is responsible for allocating social rewards. The market will reward those who have the motivation and desire to work and will punish those who 'choose' to remain idle. Social policy, according to advocates of this position, must reinforce the 'justice' of the market by ensuring that the recipient of social assistance is kept as motivated as possible to enter the labour market. Welfare programs can secure this only if they have long qualifying periods, long waiting periods, low benefit payments, or are administratively stigmatizing.

A commitment to 'universalism,' on the other hand, paints a very different picture of the capitalist marketplace. Universal social programs represent an attempt to provide a collective response to counter what is recognized as the inherent instability of the marketplace. From this perspective, it is assumed that the market is not 'just,' that it necessarily creates winners and losers, and that the responsibility for those who fail in the market is something to be shared by all of society. While residualism thus defines the objective of social policy in terms of temporarily alleviating poverty, universalism sees social policy goals more broadly in terms of building a sense of community through the redistribution of wealth and power. There-

fore, while universalism may concede that markets are important mechanisms for the allocation of wealth, other criteria such as need, rights, age, residence, and citizenship are also seen as legitimate bases for the distribution of wealth and power (Muszynski, 1992:9-10).

The nature of free trade agreements, however, is such that increasing pressure is applied to the state to shift its social policy agenda away from universalism and toward residualism. Unrestricted competitive pressures between nations force the state to protect domestic capital by lowering the 'tax burden' on businesses. Government spending on universal social programs, therefore, comes to be seen as a threat to Canada's ability to compete in the continental marketplace. As such, pressures are applied to revamp or cut existing social programs and replace them with policies that are more cost-efficient, that induce people back into the labour force, and that target benefits only to those 'truly' in need.

These policies have been aggressively pursued by the Canadian state since the signing of CUSFTA and NAFTA. The former Conservative government ended the universal Family Allowance Program and withdrew all federal support from social housing projects. New qualifying conditions have been attached to the Unemployment Insurance program that seriously undermine its universal accessibility. Social assistance has also been seriously eroded by limitations placed upon the amount of federal money transferred to the provinces (Swanson, 1993:12).

Nowhere has the shift from universalism to residualism been more apparent than in the attempts to re-define poverty to include fewer, and ostensibly 'more needy,' people. Drawing upon the work of Christopher Sarlo, the former House of Commons committee on poverty recommended that the poverty line be 're-adjusted'—in one quick stroke, the number of Canadians living before the poverty line could be reduced by as much as 90 per cent (Murphy, 1993:19). Underlying this desire to re-define poverty is the thinly veiled belief that too many Canadians who do not really require benefits are receiving social assistance.

By identifying the 'deserving poor,' the state is able to justify cuts and reforms to the social welfare system, reforms that threaten the principle of universality. As such, universal social programs are being turned into selective and residual programs, all in the name of cutting government expenditures in order to lessen the 'tax burden' of transnational businesses.

FREE TRADE AND SOCIAL POLICY HARMONIZATION: WHITHER MEDICARE?

A related danger inherent within free trade is that competitive pressures may force Canada to 'harmonize' its social policies with those of the United States and Mexico. Unrestricted free trade may compel the Canadian state to reduce social programs in order to 'match' its policies with that of its trading partners (Hum, 1988:25-26; Drover, 1988:49-50). In the process, social programs such as Medicare may be revamped in such a way as to mirror systems south of the border.

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While the issue of 'policy harmonization' amongst free-trading nations remains the subject of much debate, recent evidence suggests that there is indeed a linkage between trade liberalization and social policy harmonization (see Drover, 1988). Under free trade agreements, nation-states struggle to create, at the very least, a 'level-playing field' so that domestic capital is not encouraged to move to areas where wages are lower, environmental standards less strict, labour policies more anti-union, and taxes lower. This situation thus creates a downward pressure on social policy as a country like Canada is forced to compete with the United States and Mexico where programs are much more pro-business.

In Canada, recent changes in the health-care system reflect the real dangers of policy harmonization. Since the signing of the CUSFTA, health-care workers have seen an increase in layoffs, privatization, and the contracting-out of services, while the public has witnessed hospital closures, cuts in services and the elimination of many procedures from public health insurance plans. The federal government has slashed health-care funding in an effort to

cut its deficit, and 'user-fees' have been introduced by several provincial governments (Fuller, 1993:16-17).

Policy harmonization in the area of health-care means that Canada may be moving to a multi-tiered American-style system in which some services will be privatized, some doctors will opt-out, and user fees will be the norm. Private specialized clinics already exist in Alberta and it may not be long before other provinces pursue such policies as a way of dealing with rising health-care costs. The move to a privatized, decentralized and fragmented system, moreover, will help serve the needs of large health corporations and insurance companies who favour a competitive health care 'market' in which there is room, free from 'intrusive' state management, to reap profits. In the process, however, a two-tiered medical system may soon emerge: a hollowed-out publicly financed one for the poor, and a capital-rich privately controlled system for the wealthy.

FREE TRADE AND THE FUTURE OF THE NATION-STATE

Debates around free trade pacts have also noted that such agreements tend to undermine the sovereignty of nations, placing political power in the hands of transnational corporations or non-elected transnational agencies controlled by corporations. With the increasing ability of capital to move from one jurisdiction to another, nation-states are more than ever pressured to appease the interests of corporations, often to the detriment of their citizens. In the age of free trade, then, the ability of the nation-state to pursue progressive social policies may be curtailed by the growing political and economic power of capital.

Consequently, when the Canadian state develops social welfare policies in the future, such policies will not only have to abide by the rules set out in the text of CUSFTA and NAFTA, but they will also have to be structured in a way that benefits and promotes capital accumulation. For Canadians to become more competitive in the 'global economy,' social programs may increasingly be seen as a way to entice foreign investment. For example, recently there has been some discussion about proposals, initially tabled by

the right-wing Fraser Institute, for topping up welfare payments for people who want to work at low-paying jobs. While on the surface this may seem as a modest attempt to help welfare recipients earn extra income, there may be another agenda here. Such programs may also be designed to force as many people into the labour force as possible and make them work at a subsidized wage so that Canadian corporations can compete with the low-wage economy of Mexico. This would seem to indicate that social programs under free trade are being designed not to reduce or end poverty, but to subsidize corporations with publicly-financed wage supplements (Swanson, 1993:12).

It is important to keep in mind that wage supplement schemes are not just the fanciful dreams of right-wing economists; the current government openly entertains the idea. Furthermore, in the United States such a program is before Congress in the form of the Earned Income Tax Credit bill. If the bill is enacted, U.S. families who receive social assistance and who seek low-wage work could earn up to an extra \$3,500 a year in benefits. Meanwhile, however, Congress has failed to agree on an increase to the minimum wage. **142** Is this perhaps a sign that the purpose of the new tax credit legislation is to lessen the wage costs for businesses and provide them with a cheap pool of labour? Whatever the case, replacing Canada's social programs with a wage supplement program may be an example of harmonizing Canadian policy with American policy (Swanson, 1993:12-13).

It is unclear how a future progressive government might be constrained by trade agreements. On one level, governments will be limited in their approach by the written agreement; for instance, nationalizing pharmaceutical corporations in an effort to provide all citizens with a public drug plan would no doubt be seen as an unfair trading practice subject to retaliation (see Fuller, 1993:18). On the other hand, governments will also be constrained by the market forces unleashed by the nature of free trade agreements. For example, even if new social programs are not viewed as subsidies or unfair trading practices, governments may be discouraged from pursuing such policies out of fear of interfering in the market. Raising corporate taxes to fund programs, for instance, is less an option if businesses can easily move

from one jurisdiction to another. The nation-state is thus caught in a precarious and contradictory position: on the one hand, it has to cater to the needs of capital and create a climate conducive to profit-making, while on the other hand it must respond to the needs of its citizens who are increasingly suffering under the vagaries of the marketplace. Social policy in the age of free trade will continue to reflect this tension, especially as the ill effects of trade liberalization and other laissez-faire economic policies displace more and more people who then must turn to the state for services and programs.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

My current research suggests that both CUSFTA and NAFTA have important consequences for the development and delivery of social programs in Canada. Free trade threatens universality, promotes policy harmonization, and favours market forces rather than state intervention, thus limiting the role that governments can play in the economy.

In this context, then, free trade is really a password for economic liberalism and a social policy agenda that undermines the principles of universality and citizenship rights. While proponents of these agreements may fervently try to obscure this hidden dimension by arguing that neither CUSFTA nor NAFTA threaten social programs since these items are not part of the formal documents, the reality is that free trade does pose a serious threat to Canada's social safety net. What is urgently required, therefore, is research that begins to more fully link the ideology and practice of free trade with the current changes in social policy so as to expose the myths propagated by those defending trade liberalization. Beyond this, however, researchers will need to think about the constitution of a 'post-free trade' world, of how global economic development can be achieved in a more equitable and humane manner. Finally, we must also think about the role of social welfare programs in such a world, of how they can be used to provide a better redistribution of wealth and income. This will require a renewed commitment to full employment at decent wages and to social programs that, in the words of Jean Swanson (1993: 13), "will reduce poverty, not victimize the poor."

NOTES

1. Ricardo's thesis about 'comparative advantage' is much debated. However, the suggestion that free trade creates mutual benefits is not backed up by the bulk of empirical evidence. In fact, it appears that free trade tends to exacerbate differences between the economically dominant country and the less developed trading partner (Watkins, 1992:83).
2. For example, Canadian corporate investment in the United States alone grew sevenfold from 1975 to 1985 (Clarkson, 1991:113). Meanwhile, the concentration and conglomeration of capital in Canada, after a decline between 1969 and 1978, rose rapidly between 1978 and 1987. During this period, Canadian-controlled assets of the country's largest corporations increased from 43 to 50 per cent, while the foreign-controlled proportion fell from 29 to 25 per cent. By 1987, 74.5 per cent of the assets of Canada's largest corporations were controlled by 17 corporations, whereas in 1978 the largest enterprises controlled 63.6 per cent of corporate assets (see Richardson, 1992:311-312).

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Newsforum

Colloquim: "Zadig's Method," the Historical Sciences, Museums and the Performance of Progress

Tony Bennett, professor at Griffith University (Australia) and director of the Institute for Cultural Policy Studies, was at Carleton this Spring to present a paper at a public forum sponsored by the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, the Centre for Research on Culture and Society, and the School for Studies in Art and Culture. Bennett is the author of numerous books and articles in the field of media and cultural studies, including *Popular Culture: Themes and Issues* (1981), *Bond and Beyond: The Political Career of a Popular Hero* (with Janet Woollacott, 1987), and *Outside Literature* (1990).

Bennett's recent work signals a curious retreat from his earlier preoccupations with the 'Gramscian' tradition in cultural studies. Originally intended to overcome the perceived impasse between 'culturalist' and 'structuralist' approaches in British cultural studies, the incorporation of Gramsci's notion of 'hegemony'—a state of moral, cultural and political leadership that is actively won and not simply imposed upon subordinate social groups—offered the discipline a less mechanistic and monolithic view of the ideological domination of a ruling class or bloc. Whereas structuralist formulations of ideology suggested that cultural change and political resistance were next to impossible since domination was achieved through manipulating the world view of the masses, the concept of hegemony stressed that in order for cultural leadership to be achieved, dominant groups must 'negotiate' or engage with opposing groups.

In British cultural studies, the turn to Gramsci signalled a profound shift in thinking. Popular culture was no longer seen as part of some repressive ideological apparatus nor, alternatively, as an impulsive and

liberating expression of the 'people'. Rather, it was viewed as contradictory and contested—it was both dominated and oppositional. The field of popular culture was implicated in the struggle for hegemony in so far as it remained structured by the attempt of the ruling class to secure hegemony, and by the actions of other groups to oppose that project. Politically, cultural studies championed a transformative politics of 'counter-hegemony'—of organizing or articulating subjects into a collective political force to challenge the dominant power bloc. Developed against the backdrop of Thatcherism and its accompanying 'enterprise culture,' this political project took on an added urgency.

Despite Bennett's pivotal contribution to this important theoretical shift, his current work argues for a move 'beyond hegemony'. For Bennett, the politics of counter-hegemony is "institutionally indifferent." Since all cultural practices are conceived as bound up with the struggle for hegemony, the dominant tendency has been to see cultural struggle as the same in all cases. In effect, cultural studies has paid insufficient attention to the specific sets of discursive and structural power relations that operate within distinct cultural practices.

Bennett's current work on the 19th century museum is partially an attempt to work through these issues. Bennett rejects the view that sees the museum simply as an ideological instrument of the ruling bloc. Instead, he intends to explore in detail the specific practices, techniques, and operations of the museum that constitute it as a 'technology' (in Foucault's sense of the term) that produces a socially coded vision of the past. This vision, expressed through the performative regimes of the museum, conscripts subjects as active participants in the scientific and reformist narrative of progress.

The 'Zadig' that Bennett refers to in his lecture is a character drawn from Voltaire and later adopted by Thomas Huxley. Zadig possessed the remarkable power of 'backtelling'—by looking at tracks left by an animal he was able to faithfully visualize and reconstruct that animal. This process of generating retrospective visions—of making the invisible visible—is mirrored in the modern scientific method where causes are inferred from effects.

For Bennett, the 19th century British museum is principally a narrative machinery for 'backtelling'. The museum makes history 'visible' through the application of certain apparatuses or sets of technologies. Spatially, the museum is organized to compress time into a visible and performable 'pathway' through history. Through techniques of 'typological display' in which similar artifacts from various time periods are presented in series from the 'simple' to the 'complex,' the museum encourages visitors to engage in an "organized walking through evolutionary time." Witnessing, for example, the progression from an Aboriginal throwing stick to a spear, bow and arrow, and eventually a modern gun, visitors become 'self-teaching,' actively engaging in a progressive, civilizing, and heuristic performance.

Typological displays had deeper political motivations, according to Bennett. Showing progress as a succession of incremental improvements suggested that the rate of social change was a pre-ordained law of history. This view contrasted sharply with emerging notions of revolutionary socialism which advocated that human societies could 'jump' from one stage to another. Not surprisingly, the didactic message of typological displays were first directed at the working class at the Bethel Green Museum in London. Here, the 'technology of the series' was codified to create a progressive but conservative subject, one that recognized the 'inevitability' of gradual reform.

The 19th century British museum, therefore, worked to reinforce other emerging social institutions. From new pedagogical techniques in education to emerging methods of clinical psychology, the era was characterized by the development of 'regimes of truth' that emphasized discipline, training, and self-improvement. Increasingly, human beings were seen as creatures in need of progressive improvement and development.

While any clear assessment of Bennett's research is premature at this point, his work does nevertheless raise some intriguing questions about the nature of political interventions into the arena of cultural policy. The types of interventions suggested by the perspective of hegemony have been largely discursive—i.e. restructuring representational practices in order to allow for

the emergence of an oppositional subject. The difficulty with this position, as Bennett's analysis suggests, is that it fails to connect this 'counter-hegemonic' politics with the larger structural conditions that determine representational practices in the first instance. The promise of Bennett's work is that by providing an examination of the forms and relations of political conflict specific to particular cultural technologies, his analysis may in fact lead to more concrete political interventions that are capable of affecting the actions of agents within those technologies.

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Alternate Routes

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